

Editors
C. Chakrapani
S. Vijaya Kumar

CHANGING STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN IN INDIAN SOCIETY

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**C. Chakrapani
S.Vijaya Kumar**

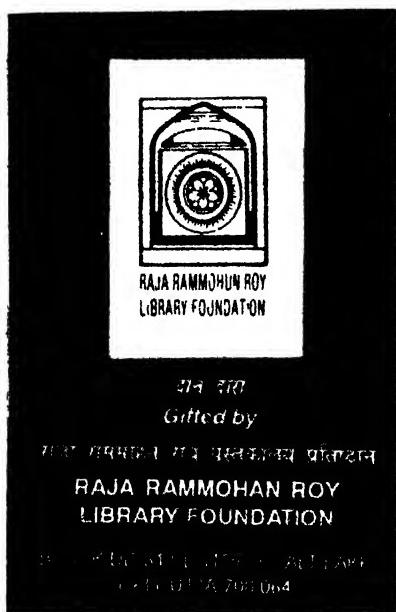


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PREFACE

The importance of studying "Women's Role" in the present day's society is more pertinent than ever because of the changing attitude in/of the society towards the same. Important among them are the changing value system with the increase in women's literacy, the increased participation of women in politics, economy and popular movements. The striking change about women's involvement which was conformed to only West in the past, is now equally manifest in India as well as in other Third World countries.

Till recently, women were treated on a different footing/ pedestal, depriving them of their rights but reminding them of their duties. But with the changing times, the role of women has changed from child bearing and rearing to bread earner. Thus the new cultural milieu is making it inevitable for them to face the emerging reality in the contemporary Indian society.

So far in the literature, concerning Andhra Pradesh state, no work is comprehensive covering all the aspects on womens' role in the changing society. Hence a modest attempt has been made in this direction. However, this is by no means exhaustive. This book brings under one cover the role of women in the changing society and their changing roles under the broad categories of Health, Education, Employment, Politics, Popular Movements and Development. The contributors are specialists in their own right, working in this area since a long time.

We wish to record our grateful thanks to all our contributors who have readily responded to our request to contribute articles.

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INTRODUCTION

In spite of comprising 50 per cent of the population on the globe, women were not given equal status with men. A major part of this sentiment can be attributed to gender role socialization that operates in every society. This differential socialization raises boys and girls for different roles. However, if the total involvement is taken into account, woman plays multiplicity of roles that far exceed those of her counterparts.

Traditionally the status and the role of women in the Indian society have been considered lower than that of men. This is closely related to the Indian kinship and economic system which assigns a subordinate and secondary role to women in the family and consequently in the society.

The global recognition of problems of women and efforts of several persons led the United Nations to declare the year 1975 as Women's Year and the decade 1975-1985 as Women's decade. Increased awareness, education and efforts of government resulted in some change of attitudes "among women and on women". This changed attitude resulted in redefining some of the roles women play in our society. This is evident by the increased women's participation in education, employment, polity, decision-making in health and family planning and raising of voices against social evils like dowry, amneocentisis and more recently anti-liquor movement.

To capture these changes in the role of women, in the present day society, an attempt is made to elicit the views of a few academicians working in this area: belonging to different specializations like Sociology, Anthropology, Economics, Development Administration, etc. The views expressed by various contributors are based on their rich empirical works. The articles that are brought together in this book are grouped under five broad categories. 1. Women and Development, 2. Health and Education, 3. Economic Activity, 4. Political participation, and 5. Women and Victimization.

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Women and Development

This section comprising of four articles deals with the role of women in the contemporary society and the issues related to their development.

Due to the technical advancement and social development the structure of the family organization is changing. These substantial changes have created new challenging role and status for the Indian women especially for the middle class women. As a member of the family she has to perform certain traditional roles apart from taking an active part in economic activity. Vijaya Kumar and Chakrapani's article "Women in the Changing Society" outlines three important roles of an Indian woman, that is, 1. premarital status role, 2. Familial status role and 3. Extra-marital status role in the contemporary Indian society. The increasing trend of participation in workforce and social life has also put lot of demands upon the educated women. In such a situation she has to make adjustments between her traditional role in the family (which cannot be totally neglected) and new role outside the family.

The recent social changes have given an opportunity for women to enter into the different developmental fields, which were once forbidden for them. In her article Usha Bambawale discusses briefly about the issues related to the development of women. She emphasizes those issues that concern women at the personal level. At personal level according to the author, education, health, work and work norms, law and political knowledge are very important factors which, one way or the other, influence the development of women socially. Despite all said and done Indian women are still far behind when compared to women in the West. This is mainly due to the age-old traditional norms and restrictions that are imposed on them. The author has explained in a logical way about the importance of education for women which ultimately improves their social, economic, health and political status.

G. Lokanadha Reddy and A. Kusuma in their article "Rural Women: Strategies for Development" opine that in India status of women is affected by different aspects and the most prominent among them are nutritional and health

status, illiteracy, ignorance about the Constitution, unorganized workforce and infant mortality. All these issues are briefly discussed with a main focus on women and literacy, and finally suggest a few strategies which are expected to help in raising the women's status.

In India the contribution of women to agricultural production, rural development, domestic chores as well as familial responsibilities is very crucial and vital. But this toilsome work has remained largely invisible to our planners and policy makers and the status of women is always in flux. Stanley Jaya Kumar in his article "Changing Directions in the status and role of women in India" critically discusses the changes that are taking place in the status and role of women in contemporary Indian society. In terms of role relationships, the traditional social structure, cultural norms and value systems continue to place Indian women in a situation of disadvantage group. Further, the social laws that seek to mitigate the problems of women remain largely unknown. As a result, Indian women whenever found in distress are much more insecure, socially and morally than men in similar circumstances. However, the recent changing trends in the structure of the society, advancement of science and technology, women's education and participation in workforce, created new avenues for the women to elevate their status.

Health and Education

Together there are eight articles in this section and health and educational aspects of women are the main topics in these articles.

The disadvantaged groups like women suffer not only due to poverty but also because of their cultural beliefs, prejudices, taboos and superstitions. All these have a strong bearing on attitude formation which, in turn, effects health and nutrition care of children in which woman plays the primary and active role. Normally programmes for health and nutrition are held separately but in reality they complement and supplement each other. However, a woman can perceive her role in nutrition and child care better, when properly educated.

Yogananda Sastry's study "Role of Women in Nutritional

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Ecosystems" deals with role of women in child care and nutrition. The study shows that it is necessary to include all the people below the poverty line in health and nutritional programmes. Like in any campaign the role of mass media in helping the women to perceive their role better cannot be undermined.

Exposure to higher levels of knowledge for longer durations might help in change of attitudes, the same is true in the case of family planning and welfare, as Prof Sundaram's article on "Development and Population Growth in India: Issues of Women and Fertility for Ideology and Action" suggests. The knowledge on development and population growth is more imbalanced in the sense that population growth is very often limited to the perspectives of control over reproduction. The population control programme considered educational development as a natural corollary of triggering mechanism to raise the age at marriage in order to limit the number of children. The issues like participation in labour force, acceptance of family planning devices, rationality behind the choice of the number of children, centre around the concept of development. In the process, development of women, that is, providing education for women, enhancing female labour participation, legitimizing the female autonomy and thus orienting the family planning programmes, is carried out through women only. This article also discusses briefly the classical thinkers like Malthus, Ricardo, the economic models of fertility and the sociological models of fertility.

Jayalakshmi and Rugmini try to look at Family Planning, with a practical consideration on fertility. They address to a pertinent question as to what influences the decision of women in adopting family planning. They assume that population dynamics depends on the observation and manipulation of the variables like class and caste, and they study this relationship between tangible resources and decision-making power. Further, social participation outside the home, provides information which enhances social status. It is interesting to note that for upper and middle class women, reproduction ceases to be an important power basis as they are in a position to derive sufficient status and power from other resources. On the other hand, the women of lower class, in the absence of other resources, have to rely on

reproduction to diminish their powerlessness. The socio-cultural factor is exerting more influence on them than the economic factor in decision-making in adoption of family planning.

Dr Suryamani deals with the constraints in the family and socialization in the context of women and child development. His article has a wide ranging objectives like; who decides on children's education, marriage, etc, to more mundane things like how the duties of housekeeping are distributed between husband and wife. The dichotomy adopted in exercise of authority in our society is evident where a more democratic form of decision-making is adopted in matters like education and occupation, more or less authoritarian decision-making is seen in the case of decisions related to economic issues. However, the mother seems to be the primary socializing agent of the child.

Technical advancement, especially in the field of medical sciences, has thrown up a whole gamut of social, legal and moral issues which have far-reaching consequences on society. Among such improved medical technologies is 'Amniocentesis', that is, prenatal diagnostic technique which was developed a few decades ago to detect genetic abnormalities in the foetus. Vijayanarayana Reddy in his article "Amniocentesis: Legal Implications" describes how state governments have reacted against the utilization of this technique. However, in India, these tests were widely used for sex determination with the specific intention of aborting the female foetus, and many of the social scientists have described this technique as one of the atrocities against women.

The links between women development and the overall economy have been proved time and again through various studies. However, it is usually believed that women are meted out with raw deal. Health is a very important aspect for women with ramifications in other critical areas. Literacy or education empowers women in making decisions regarding their children's welfare. The article by D.V. Rao on "Women and Health Delivery" (Hyderabad slums) observes that majority of the women are found to be economically dependent on their spouses. Educated women are found to have some say in decision-making regarding the family

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planning and education seems to influence the knowledge and practices of immunization also. Rao's article indicates that the existing system and personnel appear to be ineffective in delivering health services in slums.

In their article "Women in Engineering Education" Verghese and Pagnis explore a very interesting area. Education of women until recently was confined to some areas only. They are encouraged to study Home Science, Interior Design, etc, that are expected to be useful in their future roles as wife and mother. Some areas of education specially engineering has remained as the domain of males and pursuing engineering career is not ladylike. The factors responsible for the low rate of enrolment of women in engineering education are between family and school, found to have stronger influence on sex role attitudes. The stumbling block for women to enter into technical courses seems to be more due to structural and cultural factors rather than gender.

The importance of education in the development of women specially in a dynamic society needs no emphasis. In fact the Revised Education Policy . reflects the shifting priorities in terms of importance to women's education. Tracing the development of women education in the past, this article, based on empirical data, deals with sex role attitudes of women, shaped by family and school. Pagnis and Verghese try to answer the question whether the structural factor neutralizes the influence of higher education or not. The sex role attitudes are found to be influenced by father's occupation, education, maternal employment, urban background and home environment. Those in the medical and engineering faculties were found to be more egalitarian in their attitudes compared to those in science and arts. Pagnis and Verghese conclude that higher education *per se* does not liberalize sex role attitudes; positive socialization increases the accessibility to the kind of education that offers definite career opportunities.

Economic Activity

Seven articles discuss the roles played by women in the economic activity. Indira Devi's article on "Caste and Women's Participation in Labour Markets: A Study of Landless Poor"

deals with the nexus between caste and women's participation in economic activity. Based on primary data the article deals with caste and women's participation in work, and caste-based segmentation in labour markets. While caste did not seem to be an influencing factor in participation of adult women in the labour market, it affected the girls' participation. Seasonality of work availability made an impact in terms of caste differences, women's participation in workforce still seems to be influenced by caste taboos in rural areas. In spite of their economic condition the entry of upper caste women into labour market is controlled by society in terms of caste status.

Hema Kumari and Tataji in their article "Women Workers: Migration and Development" discuss gender migration and occupational patterns, gender and income pattern and contribution of income of women and its consequences on the rural households. The sample is drawn from women migrants who work in tobacco factories as graders. Migration need not necessarily be associational as usually considered by demographers. Even associational migration has to be looked at from different angles. The fact that the associational migration is for employment is a very important factor which is often overlooked. It can be seen from the data that nearly two-thirds of the migrant women were working as agricultural labour. Women were earning more or less the same amount as their male counterparts. Like some other studies the authors also try to demonstrate that the income contribution of women to the household is substantial. However, culturally the contribution to the household is not the basis for household headship, this sample also strengthens the prevalent notion. Another factor culturally determined that, irrespective of the economic factor, the authority to make decisions lies with the male head of the household. However, majority of the migrants were found to enjoy either equal authority with husbands and in some cases more authority.

In India, enormous changes have been noticed among tribal women in the world of work due to contact with non-tribal cultures. However, the tribal women are found to be active partners in all economic activities and have significant contribution towards their society. Venkata Rao in his article "Tribal Women and Developmental Programmes" briefly

discusses the implementation of various developmental programmes for tribals in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh. Keeping in view of their (tribals) undevelopmental status, after independence the government has launched various programmes and schemes through different institutions specially established for amelioration and development of tribal population. For their economic development focus has been on agriculture, animal husbandry, cottage industry and provision for institutional credit. Perhaps most of these schemes are aimed towards men. Tribal women who constitute nearly half of the tribal population do not figure much as beneficiaries. In agriculture and dairying where tribal women do most of the work, the training, demonstrations, etc. are oriented towards men.

In tribal communities, role of women in economic activity is not a new trend. They are playing a vital role in domestic as well as outside economic activities. Selling the collected forest products in weekly markets is one of their main function. Raja Reddy and Adilaxmi in their joint article "Role of Women in Economic Activity" describe the divergent role of women in Palli fishing community of Andhra Pradesh. According to the authors, though Palli women are having very important role in marketing the fish, their status in their society is at low level. The main theme of this article is the daily function of Palli women with special reference to their role in fish markets.

In their article "Migration: A Gender Analysis" Chakrapani and Vijaya Kumar discuss the theoretical orientation in migration analysis and deal with empirical data based on fieldwork. The analysis as the title suggests is done on the basis of gender and it has been tried to find the differences, if any, in terms of migration pattern, income and other aspects. Most often in a country like India, migration is triggered by the push factors than the pull factors. The major push factor being unemployment due to scarcity of resources in the place of origin. The reported migration in general, is attributed to unbalanced development in the rural hinterland. The major difference found between male and female migrants is in terms of income. One very important finding that emerged out of this study is distribution of land and provision of income generation activity as measures to check large scale rural out-migration.

Women were never accorded an independent status though they were assigned a very high place in the house. In tribal societies, the women's role is indispensable. Issues of tribal women cannot be isolated from those of tribal men. In his article "Tribal Women's Issues", Jakka Parthasarathy has examined some issues of the women of Kanikaran tribe living in Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu. The topics which are mainly discussed in this article are social organization, economic organization and political organization of the Kanikaran tribe and role of women in these organizations.

The case studies presented by G. Venkateswarlu in his article "Economic Independence for Women: A Study of Specific Programme" illustrate the rapidly changing role of women from dependents to bread winners. These studies bear testimony to the capacity of urban poor to participate in groups for mutual benefit. These women have achieved economic independence with some external help in terms of training and capital for small enterprises. The author who is the administrator and in charge of these activities, has painstakingly recorded the details of the programme and the benefit received by the individual beneficiaries. The recordings/report brings out the levels to which women can raise if proper training and opportunities are given, in a systematic way, as in the case of HSIP-III under ODA (UK) assistance.

Political participation

Four articles are included in this section covering and highlighting the women's active participation in the politics.

Jena and Mukherjee in their article discuss the discrimination of women in the society and causes of sex differentiation in both urban and rural areas. They explain the different causes for non-attention, and the role of Panchayati institutions in development. They suggest that development can take place only with effective redistribution of resources and benefits at the operational level, and with acceleration of land reforms. As they rightly point out issue of land pattas in the joint name of husband and wife is one of the most important change needed to be brought out to help increase the status of women specially in rural areas.

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While the article by Pagnis and Verghese tries to look at education as a tool of empowerment of women in economic terms, Manikyamba's article deals with another important dimension of women empowerment, namely, politics with reference to Panchayati Raj. In this she traces the genesis of women's participation in Panchayati Raj, discusses the changes that have occurred in the recent past the looks towards future with some suggestions. The article deals with qualitative data giving insights into the functioning of women in Panchayati Raj through their own experience. She also tries to focus on the loopholes of the system where a provision in the Panchayati Raj Act is used to undermine the role of women by none other than the family members of the elected women representatives. As she rightly points out in the end that underrepresentation of women in fields of social activity symbolizes the failure of the society to provide equal opportunity for all citizens. Implementation of any legislation requires political will and also social change in terms of change of attitudes of people concerned.

Jayalakshmi in her article on "Women and Political Participation" deals with the subject at two levels — one at a more general level in terms of constitutional provisions, participation of women in the freedom movement, etc, another at the micro level. She carefully demonstrates the fallacy of women representation in the nation's highest body (Lok Sabha) and also the background of women representatives. She finds that women members represented the educationally, economically and socially dominant groups. She further concludes that the presence of women in high offices has projected an inflated image of women's access to power and dignity. Women's participation in local bodies will be effective only when they are well informed of the developmental programmes, support services, etc. In other words women as a group need to be mobilized to articulate their needs with the available resources.

In his article "Women's Movement Against Liquor in Andhra Pradesh" Nagender Rao has described briefly about the adverse effects of liquor on common man and how the movement against liquor was started by rural women in Andhra Pradesh. For many societies alcoholism is one of the major problems and its impact is more on common man. Due

to economic and political reasons, though it has an adverse effects on common man, government has not taken any serious measures to ban it.

Women and Victimization

The article presented in this section briefly explores the nature and conditions of the exploited women in contemporary society.

'Basavi' is one of the age-old practices in many parts of southern India especially in rural sectors where girls are dedicated to goddess to become prostitutes. Only recently government has implemented several welfare measures for the social upliftment of Basavis. Krishna Reddy and Sujana Mallika's article "Welfare Measures for the Emancipation of Basavis of Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh" explains the impact of various welfare measures on the lifestyles of Basavis whose socio-economic life has become degenerated and miserable in course of time. To emancipate the Basavis from the age-old social evil/shackles, various welfare schemes such as vocational training, skill development, self-employment, income generation programmes and so on have been implemented. The authors have systematically highlighted how these welfare measures have made some impact on the lives of the Basavis who have exhibited in a large measure, a progressive outlook and a new urge and an inspiration for better living.

SECTION I

WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

WOMEN IN THE CHANGING SOCIETY

C. Chakrapani

and

S. Vijaya Kumar

The structure of Indian society is undergoing a metamorphosis due to urbanization, westernization, industrialization and politicalization. This, in turn, is adding new problems to the 'family organization' which is the basic institution of the society, specially to the women. For Indian women these substantial changes have given new challenging roles and status. Apart from the motherhood and domestic work, they have to undertake an active role in economic organization. Though the roles are increasing day by day but still in the present modern society the women's status has not improved considerably. The reasons may, however, be several and controversial. In this article a brief discussion is made on the role of women, to be precise, middle class women, in the changing society with special reference to their 'social roles' in the family.

In the sociological point of view the 'social role' is a functional concept and it indicates how an individual is expected to actualize his status in the form of behaviour. According to Rekha Misra "A social role is the expected behaviour associated with a social position." According to Levinson it involves function and adaptation process. The role according to him has three different distinguishable usages.

1. Role has been defined as the structurally given demands, that is, norms, taboos, expectations, responsibilities and so on, associated with a given social position;
2. Role has been defined as the member's orientation or conception of the part he is to play in the organization; and
3. Role has been commonly defined as the action of the individual members, thus it adopts various facets of

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individual and social structure features of the society (Coser and Rasenberg).

The term social role possesses socio-cultural and psychological dimensions. The socio-cultural features are the structural attributes which define the behaviour pattern concerned with a particular role. These are according to Shashi Jain defined by the prevailing norms and values in a society. Further the term social role possesses psychological connotations both at the individual and social levels. At the former level, the role is the aspect of an individual's personality. The behavioural pattern of the individual is influenced by the attitudinal and cognitive aspects of his personality. At the socio-psychological level, the expectation of the other members of the society determines the behavioural pattern of an individual. Thus the role of an individual is basically psychologically motivated but it is socially, culturally defined and conditioned.

In general, women's role can be differentiated into three major stratas. They are: 1. Premarital status role (daughter). 2. Familial status role, and 3. Extra-familial status role. The familial status role can be categorized into three aspects, that is, (i) as a wife — marital relation role, (ii) as a housewife — in regulative role, and (iii) as a mother — socializer. The Extra-familial roles are: (i) status role in work situation (employee), and (ii) role orientation in corporate life (interlinking with the system). This is further categorized into two, that is, (a) status role in political and social life (citizen), and (b) awareness of social legislation and its impact upon the status of women.

Before going into the actual discussion it is worthwhile to give a note on status of women through the ages. This will give a general understanding how the women's status has undergone changes in different ages.

A careful examination of the evaluation of human society narrates that Vedic women occupied an important place by performing a prominent role, that is, equal to the man. Women in Vedic age were educated and used to enjoy a comparatively higher status than that enjoyed by the women in the post-Vedic age. According to *Taittiriya Brahmana*, in the Vedic period a woman after finishing her period of studentship, would get married to a learned young man and was allowed to participate in the sacrifices along with her

husband and offer the oblations. By and large, women enjoyed equal status with men in religious matters. Kapadia

opines: "It was perhaps to impress the wife's partnership with a man in his religious duties that it is stated in the Taittiriya Brahmana that half the sacrifice of a person whose wife keeps away from the ceremony is lost to him."

Though in the Vedic age the society was dominated by patriarchal/patrilineal system, women were honoured as a central points in the domestic family as well as in the society. Except property rights, the Vedic women enjoyed all spheres of freedom in the society.

However, in course of time, it appears that their status both in the family and in the society gradually started deteriorating and more and more restrictions were imposed upon them. In *Manusmruthi* (Manu, IX 153) there are restrictions that tended to deprive woman of her traditional status. The investiture of the sacred thread which initiated a person into the study of the Vedas came to be confined only to male children, and the females being entitled to only one sacrament, namely marriage. Manu further says: "A woman should never think of independence from the father, the husband or the son because by so doing she will make both families contemptible" (Manu IX, 3). During Manu's period the degradation of women's status occurred mainly because according to Altekar "The introduction of the non-Aryan wife into the Aryan household is the main cause."

During the Mughal period the honoured position of women deteriorated further and the saints and poets of this age, for example, Kabir, Dadu, Tulsi, etc, denounced women as the root cause of the fall of man (Rekha Misra).

Though the saints who flourished in different parts of India from 13th to 16th centuries propagated the idea of equality between man and woman, due to several reasons this movement was suppressed by the upper groups in the society and, therefore, it failed to bring about any significant changes in the status of women.

After British administration came into existence in India, the women's position witnessed its lowest ebb. However, gradually women's social status was improved due to the social reform movements started by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, D.K. Karve and Mahadev Govind

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Ranade. With the passage of time, striking changes have taken place in the position of women. Now the options open to Indian women have increased as never before. Women's participation in the economic activities increased along with their active involvement in the active politics of contemporary India.

Along with the changes occurring in the society, role of women is also undergoing changes from time to time. However, in Indian situation the process of change is very slow. As Sullerot writes: "Indeed, concepts of the female role are set in rigid patterns which do not change rapidly, because people insist on describing women as the cornerstone of the family, the guardian of tradition, and the defender of social stability. She is always represented as the mediator between past and present, while man sees himself as the mediator between the present and the future. While she is meant to conserve what is best in the past, he must build for the future."

Premarital Status Role

From society to society and time to time changes have been observed in defining and patterning the role of women as daughters. The birth of female offspring is not equally accepted as that of male child in every society. In some primitive societies birth of female child in the family is considered as a bad omen, whereas in some societies the birth of female child is socially acceptable. However, while socializing the female and male children, high degree of differential norms, values and practices are observed. In traditional Indian society the women as daughters are kept under the restricted supervision and authority of their parents right from their infancy to adulthood. While describing the role of the daughters in traditional Indian society Margaret Cormack points out that the traditional Hindu girls are brought up with strongly maintained family relationships and customs. She further says: "they learn their functions, their power and learn to feel their importance in the family as transmitters of the cultural heritage and as potential creators of a new family group. Furthermore, they do not face agonizing decisions in their daily life. The pattern is there and all they have to do is fit into it. To do otherwise it is virtually unknown." Apart from few reli-

gious relaxations, orthodox taboos are imposed on women.

As a daughter, women's role is very limited and restricted to certain level. Their freedom is controlled and disciplined by their mothers. In majority of the Indian families at every level of the socialization a distinction between sons and daughters is commonly observed. In middle class families a strong discrepancy is found in the education of female as compared with male child. In many families the education of male offspring takes precedence over the education of female child (Shashi Jain). This situation often brings frustration and conflict among the aspiring female offsprings. The same level of discrimination was shown by many families in sending their daughters and sons to employment.

However, due to the recent social changes the women as daughters are allowed to have education and orthodox familial restrictions are gradually disappearing. Under the impact of changing socio-cultural system the women as daughters are likely to have a different pattern of role sets which may be quite different from that of their traditional role. Here education and rearing is no more confined to the learning process of familial roles, parents have recognized the need of preparing them for professional roles. Though majority do not recognize the professional role of women as a necessary event, in general they recognize the importance in socializing their daughters in such a role to cope with anticipated changes in the society. In the present day society, an opportunity has been given to women to express their views on important family matters, on their education, marriage and employment. Their revolutionary social dimensions have significant impacts on the family organization and women's participation in social life.

Familial Status Role

As long as a woman lives with her parents (family of orientation) as a daughter her roles are limited and as soon as she gets married and enters into her husband's family (family of procreation), it brings new status to her and this achieved status demands quite different types of roles to be performed by her. As a wife her relationships and obligation with her husband and with the other members of the family are expected to be more or less in tune with the traditional

relationship of women. Traditionally, the expectations of every member of the family are to be fulfilled by her, and further with her behaviour and activities she has to earn the appreciation and approval of not only of her husband but also of other members of the family.

In Indian joint family which is always dominated by male members, naturally the women would play a subordinate role. In Hindu society the roles and duties of a housewife according to Altekar are, "The household management is primarily her duty to be discharged in consultation with her husband. She is to frame a proper annual budget and regulate the daily expenditure accordingly. If the husband is spentthrift, it is her duty to put a gentle check on his extravagance. She is to be pay master of the household. She is to look after the general needs and comforts of the servants. If the family is an agricultural one, general supervision over cattle and agriculture comes within her jurisdiction. If the family is an agriculture comes within her jurisdiction. If the family is poor she is to help her husband by taking her own share in the manual labour of the household management. If the husband is away, she is to shoulder the whole responsibility of the household and discharge it with due regard to any instructions that he may have left behind." In brief as a housewife the role syndrome is regulative in nature and is concerned with the management of the household affairs. Here it is worthwhile to recollect Yajnavalkya's [1928] work "an ideal woman is an ideal housewife and all her greatness and goodness lie in maintaining the happy home."

However, recent changes in the institution of family, education and economic independence of women have affected the traditional system and brought some structural changes in the status and roles of women as a housewife in the family. In modern era not only the roles of housewife are splitting up but a change is occurring gradually with regard to the emergence of new roles to be performed by her. In her family as a responsible member she is expected to participate in decision-making process in the family and gaining a new status. The increasing trend of participation in workforce and social life has also put lot of demands upon the educated women. In such a situation she has to make adjustments between her traditional role in her family that cannot be

totally neglected, and new roles outside the family. To certain extent the advanced technology has enabled her to perform her roles inside her family in a new way.

In the present day context the onerous responsibilities of the family for maintaining the day-to-day household affairs are not upon the shoulders of husband or wife alone, but they are increasingly shared by other members of the family also. In this decentralization process the roles of husband, wife and other members, in a joint family are not segmental but are gradually becoming diffused. Shashi Jain points out: "Modern housewife is now called to perform many functions in her family, which were hitherto exclusively in the domain of male members only. Similarly the husbands are also sharing many of the household work which were traditionally enjoyed upon their wives only. Recent changes have brought about not only the diversification of roles to be performed by the housewife but they also brought about a new pattern of role-differentiation in terms of household functions to be performed by the wives and husbands." In Jain's opinion the higher educational achievements of the women and the economic affluence of their family are the most important reasons responsible for opening new horizons of housewife's role both inside and outside her family.

As soon as a woman attains the status of 'mother' additional roles will add to her usual roles. In Hindu society a woman as a mother has a unique place. Despite her inferior position as a daughter and housewife, she has supreme position in the society as a mother. In the family, out of the two parents the mother's role is greater and more significant now.

In traditional set-up, according to Shashi Jain, "the ideal of Hindu womenhood has differed at many places in real practice, so also the ideal concept of motherhood has remained a far-off dream. In practical and daily life, her function of motherhood was simply keeping the child fed and clothing. She was not responsible for the education of boys and had little to say in the education of girls. A mother had limited role in her childrens upbringing, education, and marriage settlements." To be precise she had no voice in the family and social matters. Her ignorance and illiteracy were the responsible factors for her inferior status in the family.

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The higher education of women and their entry into employment has brought a radical change in the concept of child rearing and these factors are remarkably influencing the 'socializing role' of a woman as a 'mother'.

According to Leonard and Van Der Ker (1944), "Ideal parents enter whole-heartedly into parenthood and become 'active parents' in this work. A mother has a greater responsibility than the father. The 'family constellation' is a phrase which aptly signifies the importance of the interaction of the individuals upon one and other. The family revolves around the child, the child around the mother and so on until each planet in this star pattern has an effect upon every other one."

In general, the woman as a mother is the socializer of the new generation. Her interest and involvement in child rearing, her close identification and contribution in developing the 'basic personality structure' of the child, have given a new status to mother, that is, the preserver of the 'cultural traditions' and socializer of young generation with the old values and norms and thereby provides the stability and continuity to the social structure. These are her cultural roles and apart from these, her role in the development of the emotional psychological aspects of the child is also of significance.

Shashi Jain points out that in modern times, the educated mother's role is becoming differentiated as the demands of the new situations involve the inculcation of new values among children. Further, the working mothers have their own problems in caring their children. In the changed family system, the role of the mother is also experiencing stress and strains of multiple role demands of the women. The concept of child rearing has been so far revolutionized and is still changing further.

Extra-marital Status Role

Rise of women's movements resulted in attack on the privileged position of men, particularly in economic and political roles. According to Promilla Kapur (1944), "one of the major consequences of the varied processes of change operating in the country has been the emancipation of women from their tradition bound ethos. In free India women

have been entering salaried, remunerative professions in increasing number." While discussing about men's and women's roles in India, Debu (1944) writes: "There are unmistakable signs that the traditional conceptions regarding the place and role of women are slowly changing in contemporary Indian society. Increasing opportunities for modern education, greater geographical mobility, and the emergence of new economic patterns are in the main responsible for this trend."

In occupancy of a new status position by the woman as a housewife, according to Roma Das (1944) the extra-familial status as a working woman results in enlargement of her status set. Since each status position has its accompanying role-set, this additional status adds another complement of a role-set. A woman who has only the role of a wife and mother has more time and energy to devote to the fulfilment of the demands of the family responsibilities but if she engages herself in an occupation, she has less time to fulfil the expectations and demands and obligations of her family members. As such she expects sympathetic consideration, and modification in the expectations and demand structure of her family members. In such cases the role-conflict arises. Rama Das further says that in the present day a working woman is under great physical and mental strain, because she cannot escape from domestic duties. Even today the woman is considered as a principal responsible person for the family.

Though more and more number of women are entering into the economic market, even till today a working wife is not yet clear about her roles because of the confusion that is created by the changed social system. Further, the traditional role and the new role always confronted with one against the other and placed women at confusion state. Dowell (1944) said: "students of the family have assumed that adding the role of employee to the women's role of wife and mother often necessitates a redefinition of the roles of family members in terms of duties and responsibilities. While examining the role conflict of working women Myrdal and Kelin (1944) say: "women have willingly accepted their two responsibilities as workers and mother: their problem is how to harmonize the two." The family maintenance is the main role of the women, and men — a bread earner. This is

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the traditional concept and these traditional/orthodox roles are clearly demarcated. But in recent years industrialization has given more economic freedom to women but at the same time it has not relieved them of their household tasks. These two different roles can be easily managed if the working woman gets cooperation from her husband. In this connection Myrdal and Klein say: "those who assert that home making is womens exclusive role commit the fallacy of leaving women alone to do a thing which should be done jointly by men and women if the ideal of a happy home is to become a reality." However, in reality the needed cooperation is not available to working mothers and they are unable to provide an encouraging environment to their children. Further in such a condition they cannot justify their job also.

To conclude, social change gradually makes the women to realize their status and role in all spheres of social activities. Specifically industrialization has brought about a new phenomenon and except the difference in biological roles, the equality of sexes has been established. By entering into economic force the advantages gained by the women now are: they can have a better medical care, better home and the possibility for extending the children's education. By working they can increase not only the family's welfare but can attain their personal status and independent social standing.

Along with the changing characteristics of marriage contract, the degree of economic independence of women is also undergoing radical changes. Now the movement has been towards equality. The young women once who had no alternative other than accepting early marriage and economic dependency can now earn on their own and this economic independence gives them more power to choose when and whom they should marry, to take part in important decisions in the family and so on. Though they are perhaps still far from possessing an equal economic status to that of men, the present ongoing changes will definitely give equal recognition in future.

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WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES

Usha Bambawale

Introduction

In years gone by development meant economic development but the experience in recent years has brought home the fact that development has political and social dimensions as well. Independence brought the promise of equality of opportunity in all spheres to the Indian women. Laws granted equal rights of participation in the political process, equal opportunities and rights to education and employment were enacted. In India as in other countries the problems women face have a specific colouring depending on the socio-economic and cultural milieu in which they have been nurtured and moulded. Their problems are influenced by various social considerations and they necessarily determine the welfare of the home, family and society.

Political development could be assessed in terms of stabilization and consolidation of participatory political institutions. Specially in a democracy this is an important issue. Where such a development takes place, the political authority is responsive to the people and conversely people have faith in the political authority and have opportunity to participate in the political process.

Social development may be conceived in terms of progressive social integration. When society is fragmented into different groups and one section of society dominates another, development cannot take place in a smooth and harmonious manner. An integral component of development is Social Homogeneity. Without it there can be no unity and social solidarity and without them no society can develop.

In the initial stages of development, emphasis was on economic development. The priority was economic growth and the ideology was capital formation. This was to be

achieved through planning. The primary purpose of planning was to promote industrialization and to attract foreign aid and collaboration. Finally this short sighted policy was rather pessimistic because these developmental issues had not included women in the process.

In India a second phase began when growth was taken for granted to be a priority for development. It was assumed that growth and subsequent development would take place with the trickle down policy. When people in higher echelons were concerned with issues of employment, alleviation of poverty, improvement of income distribution and satisfaction of basic human needs, the change could take place.

Today, India has recognized the investment in 'human capital' and planned to educate and train women in various skills and acknowledged that manpower planning is an essential part of the developmental process.

Developmental Issues

Many countries have today set up women's movement in development action as a direct result of the United Nation's Decade for Women 1975-1985. The decade network provided a forum for discussion for the role of women in development and it put forward ideas for the inclusion of women at all levels in development programmes. One has to recognize the fact that woman works at two levels, at a private one and at a public level. She forms networks with the family of her birth and the one she is married into. Initially she worked only at the private level and was provided the basic necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, was cared for and sought entertainment within the familial group. The family was fairly self-reliant and autonomous unit depending primarily on the members of the family. These families were invariably patriarchal and women played a secondary role, specially that of a child bearer and child carer. Women also had a focal importance in contributing essentially to the livelihood of the family. Proverbially known as the weaker sex, women in reality have proved to be tougher biologically and not inferior psychologically and culturally. Without the work done by women everyday life could not be managed. The work of both men and women was necessary for life to proceed smoothly. A very basic form of power was the power of one's work and

its importance.

Within the process of development most of the functions of the traditional family unit were transferred outside the family and the public family was born. With this began the demarcation between the educated, professional and skilled women on one hand, and the unskilled women on the other. These women who have no skills cannot play a full role in development. The power of the powerful increases when there is considerable ignorance, illiteracy and total lack of information. These issues contribute towards non-development and those who have these powers exercise their rights to determine the future shape of their communities and countries. The treatment of the intellectual basis of contemporary feminism has by the nature of its emphasis left out several other matters which are worth exploring. The values that have to be reviewed in this context are rationalism, individualism, secularism and utilitarianism and are as follows:

1. Rationalism is an orientation to utilize analytic method in investigating reality. This means dividing reality in parts.
2. Individualism is the orientation stressing the rights and achievements of the individual over that of the group.
3. Secularism refers to the orientation that puts a higher value on affairs and authority of other than religious institutions.
4. Utilitarianism is the value orientation that relegates the environment to woman's control for her own material advantage.

These four values lead to alienation and manifesting a condition or feeling of fear, anxiety, loneliness, separation. This is because many will not subscribe to these value systems. Concepts such as vulnerability, transcendence and communalism become important factors in retarding women's actual ability to struggle into the present developmental efforts.

At the level of action developmental issues concerning women are many. Those that women can combat at their own levels are twofold — issues that concern women at the national developmental level and those that concern her at

the personal level.

At the personal level education, health, work and work norms, law and political knowledge are very important issues for development.

In India the literacy level of women is approximately 25 per cent today. Most of the social change issues suffer because women who form 50 per cent of the population are uneducated and ignorant. Yet Indian women are visible in politics and seeking higher education and white collared occupations outside their home.

If one looks at each of these components which make up a lifestyle of awareness and responsibility, education should be considered the first one. The rest of the components more or less are entwined with education.

Education

To be able to read and write is the greatest gift to a modern man or woman. This enables many ideas to be taken in, for the spoken and written word cannot be denied. One need not depend on another person to read out to him and make him wise about a situation. The written word becomes a tool of power. Those who know and those who do not are in the same categories of 'haves' and 'have notes' as envisaged by Marx. Women who follow any dictum without questioning do so because they are unable to read what several people say about the issue. Thus they are prevented from various views and take a unilateral decision from the views fed to them. This can happen through a political leader. The uneducated are deaf and dumb to world opinion and are at great disadvantage. One of the greatest drawbacks of the lack of education of the Indian woman is seen in her status and position today. Urbanization, education and employment of women bring forth a change in attitudes and belief of women in terms of equality, independence, and individuality. For an independent assessment of any situation, be it marriage, family matters, banking, business, pattern of religious worship or professional education a woman should be capable of making her own decision with enough foresight which is possible only through education. Educated women contrary to popular belief, do not lead constricted and discontented lives, but have multiplicity of options that permit them to be

in highly advantageous position to realize whatever goals they set for themselves. They have strong ties to the world of work and many of them are able to balance career and family satisfactorily.

Health

The socio-economic conditions of women reflect the health of a nation. If one does not have a healthy body the saving goes — 'you do not have healthy mind.' So to keep a healthy environment, immunization should be encouraged to protect the children, and small family norms are definite steps towards changed ethics. In today's world due to industrialization, modernization and to a great extent westernization the women are under great pressure than they were 50 years ago. To keep a balanced mental and physical health women should take greater care of their children and themselves. Braybon and Summersfield vividly bring to life the experiences of women during war and how their health was affected during the two world wars.

Proper diet and exercise are also an integral part of a health programme. What is proper food and what diet should be followed are important and noteworthy factors in today's world. All this is possible if one is acquainted with the authority in charge of health problems. An educated woman can read and utilize various home remedies for the family. Not only that, but working out a balanced diet for the family and encouraging them to take proper exercise would then be easy. The health aspect is so undermined that young girls are married off at the age of 12/13 years or even at a younger age. This results in early pregnancies many a time causing death of the mother. A WHO report (No. 90) states: "some 500,000 women die of pregnancy related causes each year, most of them are preventable." The highest number of women who die in India are between 16 and 25 years of age. Anaemia is common amongst Indian women. They are often not too healthy when they bear the first child and none of them are physically ready to bear a second child. But there is an inevitable cycle of pregnancies, which completely enslaves the woman and she has no time for her own betterment through education. In every country of the world, women's health has been neglected.

Work and Work Norms

Analysis of woman's status in society is inseparable from the economic structure. Taking shape within and subverting the former collective economy, the family as an economic unit transformed woman's work from public production to a private household service. Unlike the rural women urban women who have received education are relatively new entrants into the world of paid employment. To be profitably engaged in a profession or a job is very important to a woman of today. The majority of the new female workers the world over are young, between 15 and 23 years on an average. This is because female labour is very cheap. Women are the preferred workforce because they are docile, easily manipulated and willing to do boring repetitive assembly work. Women are claimed to be perfect employees, with natural patience and manual dexterity. Many women are also attracted by part-time jobs because of family commitments. The shorter working hours make available the whole new source of labour — the average housewife. The wage structure, conditions of work, unemployment of educated women, availability of part-time jobs, in-service technical training and protective legislation have in some ways encouraged women to take up a working role.

In developing countries women often work for 16 to 17 hours a day. This overwork leads to susceptibility to disease, malnutrition, low levels of physical and mental health. Those women who have been absorbed in small scale industries have to accept a salary lower than that given to men. Most of those women who work in the formal sector are members of unions but do not have a voice in union activities, which are totally male dominated. Women in small scale industry are a target of hiring and firing. Invariably they have a husband who is out of work or a prey to a vice such as drugs or drink. In such circumstances the woman has to support her children and also the husband. Lack of education drives her to take up any available work.

In India domestic work is considered a non-skilled job and most of the uneducated women turn to it when in need of money. A few who are educated and have a professional qualification often accept jobs that society feels are good for women. As a consequence an engineer may not get a job in

a factory but has to be contented with teaching in an engineering college. Debilities then are entirely made by society and reflect on women's status and society. Women who enter the workforce invariably do so due to social necessity. When they enter the work-sphere, non-responsible jobs which are an extension of their familial role are offered to them. Teaching, nursing or ancillary jobs as cooks and domestic servants are easily available to women. When women took up men's jobs such as stenotyping or clerical work the status of the job got lowered. These trends continue even today and one can see women flooding the pharmaceutical companies as packers, women clerks in banks and offices, women nurses in hospitals and women working on benches in the electronic industries.

The professional worker is a phenomenon which entered India with independence. The Constitution ensured equality to men and women but it is an equality which has social overtures. Society has to accept all the changes within its milieu and professional women who compete with men have to prove time and again: (i) the fact that they have been employed by virtue of their qualifications; (ii) they are good at their work and, therefore, justified in keeping their jobs; and (iii) they do not require to please anybody for promotion but to be judged on merit. Women in management and professions face discrimination but in the long run a bigger problem is to find patterns of employment and family living which will leave top qualified women free to follow a life cycle different from men's, yet recognized that they, like men, are now life-time workers. Women who work in places where men dominate have to combat advances made towards them in overt or covert manner by men.

There are very few professions which are not open to women today. But the struggle to secure a job which is in keeping with their qualifications still exists. This is because men are still considered the chief bread winners in spite of more and more women entering the workforce and managing the dual burden of home and work. Women need not have reservations at college and in offices as declared by the Government of India if they are given their rightful place and judged on merit for appointments and promotions.

Law

There is no woman who has not suffered at one time or another the harrassment, humiliation, exploitation and violence that shadows her sex. The Constitution gives women equal rights along with men. But what remains is the acceptance of society. An anti-dowry law exists, yet wife-burning and dowry deaths are increasing. The anti-sati law passed in the last century during Lord Bentinck's time is still not implemented as a few years ago a woman was forced to burn on a husband's pyre and revered in Deorala. There is a law against second marriage but this takes place without divorce or proper settlement for the first wife. The Shahabano case was the acid test of women's right to law. No woman can inherit property without breaking relations with her brother. No woman can expect support from her parents if her husband ill-treats her. No woman can stand up with respect if raped. This proves that the whole law structure of the country today is not for those who are straight and good because the loopholes in it allow antisocial and lawless to go scotfree. There is no uniform civil code because the Constitution respects secularism and allows religious laws to precede over the constitutional law. With such a state of affairs there is neither status nor role respect for women in our law. This is once again justified through the rape law which when analysed thoroughly shows that it is anti-women. Even though the new amendments insist upon proof of innocence of man the very fact that man can assault another human being is shameful. Society holds the victim responsible for being raped which acts as a deterrent for the victim to make a case against the rapist. This unfortunately is the situation today, for society looks upon a woman as a temptress. India's problems regarding women stem from poverty, general backwardness, misconceptions, superstitions and socio-cultural values.

What can women do about this? The only solution is to follow the legal sanction that the Constitution has provided for people. Women lawyers could help other women to get justice and try not to get postponements, since scores of years pass by before justice is in sight. Women's organizations could promote legal literacy classes to acquaint women with the law of the land and the rights given to women.

Political Knowledge

An important aspect of democracy is that people take interest in politics. It cannot be dismissed by saying that it is a dirty game or that politics is a game of power. Women should be better acquainted with the political structure which would help them to understand many facets of life in our country. Due to urbanization, industrialization and modernization caste and creed is becoming a little rusty but politicians keep religion alive. Not a single form of the government is available without a column where one has to write down one's religion and caste. In an attempt to keep alive caste, government has helped the policy of reservation. Women must be on guard on many scores. Today we are well aware of the clout of politicians and yet women dismiss political knowledge as belonging to a man's world. Those who do not wish it, need not enter politics, but political knowledge is of vital importance in this case, ignorance is not 'bliss'. Everyone must know what is happening around in the political arena.

The political heirs use the religious platform to strengthen their cause and use religion as a tool to get what they want, which is a block vote. It is obvious that politics has strange bedfellows and mostly the association is found between religious heads and politicians who are all opportunists. The common man or woman gives into their gimmicks due to political ignorance. Those who are religious, also lack logic and rationality, consequently they play in the hands of these politico-religious people. Women ask their husband, father or son before casting a vote, that itself is as great a tragedy today as not voting. By not voting we still vote indirectly for elements that do not deserve to govern us. Women who think they are knowledgeable, progressive and modern must inform other women about these pitfalls and help them to gain political knowledge. Further while women have steadily increased their responsibilities as voters they have been slow to assume position of responsibility at the state and central levels where their number has been very small. Therefore, the women in India require to assess the realistic scenario for the integration of women in the process of national development.

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Conclusion

Today we see women in all walks of life but there are several more who are very far away from the forces of modernization. They are far removed from the mainstream of life because of religious restrictions which they accept unquestioningly or due to ignorance. How long can this go on? A citizen of free India must not depend entirely on government resources. No National Perspective Plan can help women unless they themselves decide to take their life in their own hands. A small but slow beginning is to become aware of processes that are going on in society.

Today the electronic media has taken over the task of spreading knowledge. Communication is so much easier today through information dissemination via the ratio, TV and video. The final key to women's development is with women themselves. When all women endeavour to walk the path of development and accept the challenge of self development, the nation will progress in no time at all.

RURAL WOMEN

Strategies for Development

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and

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In Vedic period women enjoyed high status. However, certain historical facts of the later period led to the crystallization of restrictive social norms, which effectively deprived women of their valuable rights, such as right to education, right to move freely in public and in society and the right to live after the demise of their husbands. The restrictive social norms reduced the position of women almost to that of a slave. During the last century and the first half of this century, social reform movement emphasized the improvement of women's status through education, restriction on child marriage, improvement in the conditions of widows and provision of property rights to Hindu widows.

The preamble to the Constitution of India resolved to secure to all its citizens, "social, economic and political justice, liberty of thought: expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and opportunities, dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation." Indian women are entitled to these rights just as men are. Some of the directive principles are — free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14, right to an adequate means of livelihood, equal pay for equal work, maternity relief, etc.

There are different aspects that affect the status of women in India. The most prominent among them are: Nutritional and health status, illiteracy, ignorance about the laws, unorganized workforce and infant mortality.

Nutritional and Health Status

Sex composition is an indicator of the socio-economic and health condition of males and females. Sex-ratio is defined as the number of females per 1,000 males. Results of the 1991 census show the decline in the country's female

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population as compared to males. The 1944 census report reveals that there are 929 women per 1,000 men. While in 1901 when India was under British control, there were 972 women per 1,000 men. This is a visible indicator of low female status and should be seen as a threat to society.

The major reasons for decline of sex-ratio in any population are selective migration, sex differential mortality, sex-ratio at birth and undercounts of females. Outmoded attitudes and traditions are the major hurdles in the development of women in India. Discrimination starts before birth. If they escape being killed in the womb or soon after birth, then they have to face a hostile world from the very first day. They are ill-fed and no opportunity is given to them for personal expression. Malnutrition leads to higher incidence of illness among female children. In the developing countries, between 20-45 per cent of women are not fed the minimum recommended calories of food. Data based on household expenditure show a positive discrimination against women in sharing of food and other items in the normal household. Available data on dietary consumption among one to 18 year olds show that girls consume much less than boys (UNICEF, 1990). This situation has a decisive adverse consequence on the health status of young mothers and their offsprings, more so when nutritional deprivation, in terms of calorie adequacy, continues throughout pregnancy and lactation.

Nutritional deprivation is one of the reasons for declining sex-ratio as the available data show high female mortality leaving aside dowry deaths, female infanticide and female foeticide. The study conducted by the National Institute of Nutrition (1944) of 230 girls in the age group of 10-17, attending schools in Hyderabad, indicated:

1. The nutritional status of both the rural and urban girls was poor as compared to boys.
2. Anaemia was common, with 45 per cent of the girls having haemoglobin less than 11 gm.
3. At meals, the discrimination towards a female child was noted.

Barbara Harris (1944) also reports:

- I) Gender discrimination on micronutrients in the food allocated is there both in the North and the South, especially among adolescent girls, pregnant and

- lactating adult women and female children.
- ii) Gender differences in growth retardation among children appear to be a phenomenon confined to the North.
 - iii) Gender discrimination on macronutrients is pronounced in both poor and non-poor households in parts of North India and among very poor households in South India.
 - iv) The increased female participation in wage work and increased contributions of females to total household income do not translate into increased calorie supplements to females.

The studies conducted by Bhagwati (1973) and Sen (1984) in Indian sub-continent reveal that there is discrimination against females in terms and measurement of nutrition supply, mortality and health. While in most advanced countries, more males than females die in infancy and childhood, the reverse is true in India.

Women and Law

Women oppressed and suppressed for a long time, should have legal knowledge to protect themselves without further exploitation by knowledgeable persons. Law is a social phenomenon. For the cohesion of human society and peaceful resolution of internal conflict, rules of conduct are necessary and they evolve that these rules of conduct enforced by political authority are laws. Even in the most primitive society rules of conduct existed in the form of customs.

Custom is nothing but uniformity of conduct in the given circumstances. Custom is embryonic law. When primitive society becomes politically organized and matures itself into a state, the custom emerges as law. The first origin of Hindu law is a custom. Even today the Hindus are governed by customary law in certain aspects. Rituals performed at the time of Hindu marriage have their origin in ancient custom of Hindu society.

Law can be used as a powerful instrument of social change. Law induces a new pattern of social behaviour more conducive to the prosperity of society, for example, the

baneful institution of 'Sati' was prevalent in India in olden days and by this custom a Hindu widow was compelled to immolate herself on the funeral pyre of her deceased husband. This custom must have come into existence because of the evil designs of her husband's 'Sapinda' relations to extinguish her so that her deceased husband's property in her possession and enjoyment might accrue to them. This obnoxious custom was abolished by legislation, and now it is made a punishable offence. This legislation helped the emancipation of Hindu women and affords security for their lives.

Similarly, the institution of untouchability in Hindu society is an evil which is threatening the very fabric of Hindu society. The horrors of Belchi and Pipra and now of the Tholar village near Pennadam in Tamil Nadu are the brutal effects of the evil of untouchability. The mass conversion of Harijans into Islam at Meenakshipuram in Tamil Nadu and other places have been shaking the very foundation of Hindu society. Though the Removal of Untouchability Act is in force the orthodox sections of Hindu society still discriminate the Harijans.

It is to be observed that law is a conservative force and hence it is always formed for the lagging behind advancing social needs. In a changing society the needs of the society change from time to time. In a progressive society law has to keep pace with the changing needs of the society. Thus law has to undergo progressive change if it is to serve the needs of the society. The provision for divorce in the Hindu Marriage Act, the Child Marriage Restraint Act prohibiting the marriage of children, the Removal of Untouchability Act, the recent protection of Civil Rights Act, the various tenancy laws and other debt relief acts intended to rescue the weaker sections of the society from the burden of debts and so also the abolition of Bonded Labour Act and the Home Stead Act conferring right in the house-site on which the landless poor have constructed their houses — are all but a few examples of legislation to serve the need of our changing society.

Since independence the political consciousness of the people in India has undergone a radical change. The people have become more conscious of their legal rights. This is reflected in the various forms of activities of different sections of the people. Instances of seeking legal remedies through

various courts of law have become more frequent. Out of all the most important remedies which the people seek through courts is the writ of Habeous corpus for the liberty of the individual. Even in remote villages people are availing legal remedies to redress the infringement of their rights and to indicate the wrongs done to them.

In spite of the growing awareness of the legal remedies there is yet a large section of the population particularly women who do not have even elementary knowledge of the laws in force in our country. It is necessary to provide legal knowledge to the masses especially women in India so that they may become not only law-abiding but also conscious of their legal rights.

Education and Workforce Status of Women Need for Reorientation of Programmes

Education is the backbone of social development. According to the 1991 census, the percentage of literacy in men in India is 63.86, whereas in women 39.42. This indicates that illiterate women population is more than that of illiterate men population. In a country like India which had accepted the goal of creating a new social order based on freedom, justice and equality, imparting of literacy should be intended to reach a broader goal of promoting social awareness, critical consciousness and equalization of opportunities. Hardly 39 per cent of our women are literate. In rural women, the percentage of literacy is hardly 25 per cent. About 90 per cent of the women work in unorganized sectors where no child care and maternity benefits are available. The number of unemployed girls who have completed school has more than 55 lakhs. It is also sad that 65 per cent of the pregnant women are found to be anaemic and the infant mortality rate in the first year of birth is about 10 per cent. Children dying of malnutrition before the age of five is about 40 per cent. There is continued inequality and vulnerability of women in all sectors — economic, social, political, legal, education and health care nutrition.

At the same time, the menace of dowry, violence against women, sexual harassment, damaging portrayal of women in the media, infanticide, foeticide, etc, are growing and hampering the status of women in India.

To bring women together is the major task of any organization. 'Organize the unorganized for Unified action' is the only solution to solve women's problems. At grass-root level women organizations like Mahila Mandals should take the leading role. If such organizations are not existing in certain areas, the non-formal education (NFE) programmes should facilitate such activity.

The non-formal education programmes remaining a second rate educational programme for the poor and deprived are considered to be a welfare activity, whereas the formal system continues to remain elitist. This will continue until the two streams are regarded as parallel streams in which movement from one system to the other is possible and feasible. This would necessitate some form of equivalence and accreditation so that the formal and non-formal systems become interfacing systems of education. The government should take initiative to bring the formal system of education close to the NFE system of education by utilizing the existing facilities of the formal system. There is a greater need for the orientation of the formal education teachers from primary to university level towards community work. At the same time, emphasis should be laid down to use community resources for the benefit of formal system of education. Further, the stereotyped sex-bias contents in the formal as well as non-formal education textbooks must be deleted to develop positive self-concept in girls and women.

It is now becoming very clear that the conditions of poverty deprivation and powerlessness, the only strategy that will be effective in bringing together women in groups around common issues and concern, and through a process of dialogue and discussion, raising their critical consciousness. Collective action by the women is the sole solution to solve the women's problems or to change the existing conditions.

The existing educational programmes do not provide women with the tools to understand and analyse the true nature of social, political and economic systems that govern their lives and oppress them. Learning of their being drilled in health, nutrition and family planning cannot solve their problems. What they need in this crucial hour is the understanding of the social forces that result in women bearing so many children, working endless hours without rest, being

beaten and raped, putting up with alcoholic husbands and going hungry. To achieve this end, grass-root planning and action is needed to make the women active participants in the development process and the education offered to them should be a tool for empowering them.

The planners and administrators must believe that both non-formal education and poor illiterate women are important and then financial and technical resources have to be made available on a regular and sustainable basis. Programmes have to be designed in consultation with the poor and the most needy women. More importantly, the NFE programmes encourage the kind of learning by which women can assume greater control over the choices and direction and quality of their lives. The programmes should develop confidence in the participants. Furthermore, adjustment is needed in the planning framework for women's integration in the process of development. In order to do this, the planners must discard the stereo-typed images and roles that have been attributed to the sexes. The women should be portrayed not only as 'home maker' but also the 'producer of goods and services'. Hence, once again there is a greater need to give emphasis on skill development for girls and women. Skill development not only in household work, art and crafts but also in vocational skills is a non-traditional way, for example, skill development to earn enough to support their own living, to control and maintain their physical health, and participation in the democratic system. Every skill development effort has both social and economic aspects. Social goals serve to enhance a woman's status in the family and society. The economic goals are in terms of organizing a gainful activity providing more income. Skill development activities should be thought as a medium for empowerment. The planners must, therefore, keep in mind which skills are potentially major source of employment for women.

Further, the existing non-formal education programmes show that they reinforce and stereotype the traditional roles and abilities of women. These programmes are emphasizing that women have to play a supportive and subordinate role in social and economic development. The existing primers and reading materials for non-formal education and adult education programmes for women in India clearly reveal this

fact. As a consequence, women are provided education in the so-called female occupations such as health, nutrition, child care, home economics, serving handicrafts, etc. All these existing non-formal education programmes ignored the fact that majority of women in rural areas are also involved in agriculture and are farmers and labourers just like men. While the largest concentration of the female labour force is in the agricultural sector, they are also engaged in a variety of small business, production and marketing activities. As such they require at least minimum technical knowledge, training in agriculture and related tasks, they are engaged in. But unfortunately women are excluded from the training programmes aimed at improving the agricultural productivity. In Asian countries, studies have shown that the male-female differential in agricultural productivity has been aggravated by the infrastructural support programmes that give pre-economics to men as heads of the household. The study conducted by Jain showed that it is the men who are provided the training despite the fact that some of the agricultural and dairying operations are performed exclusively by women. As a result, female agricultural workers have much less access to information and training for improved farming methods and to credit marketing and other facilities.

Following are some of the strategies to raise the status of women in India:

1. Mass protest against dowry and social exploitation of women.
2. Creation of mass consciousness about the status of women.
3. Provision for training facilities of employment. Women should be given skill training in agriculture, animal husbandry and other related employment, special training programme for rural women entrepreneurship, appropriate technology for drudgery reduction and enhancing productivity.
4. Supportive services should be provided by the central and state governments and voluntary organizations for women in distress.
5. Legal aid centres, mobile courts, and counselling centres should be organized.
6. Efforts should be made to organize the unorganized

women workforce to protect their rights and safeguard themselves from exploitation. Insurance cover, maternity and other benefits should be expanded to unorganized women workforce.

7. Special cells should be created to enforce legislation of job security, working conditions, minimum wages, equal pay for equal work, etc, which should be extended to unorganized sectors too.
8. Different media should be involved to create awareness for women's education and their role in economic, social and political development of the nation. Portrayal of women should be properly done through media.
9. More productive beneficiary-oriented schemes should be launched especially for women by the government and non-government organizations.
10. More and more women voluntary organizations should be encouraged to launch women development programmes.
11. ICDS programmes should be strengthened to ensure girl child's equal access to health care, mother and child care and nutrition. Vocational training, education, maternity and child welfare aspects must get interwoven with all the women development schemes.
12. Efforts should be made to remove sex-bias and promotion of the value of equality through school curricula.
13. Ban should be imposed on sex determination tests like amniocentesis, ultrascanning which lead to medical termination of pregnancies.
14. The curriculum in formal, non-formal and adult education for women should include following areas invariably:
 - i) *Family education:* Rearing of children, family budgeting, recreational education,
 - ii) *Health education:* Nutrition, hygiene, health camp, sports, nursing, social and economic education. Community leadership, community participation, women's education, eradication of superstitions and casteism, class and power structure, ownership, wagework, trade union, property rights, distribution consumption, co-operatives, consumer related aspects;

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- iii) *Political and civic education:* Village administration, adult franchise, current affairs at village, state, national and international level, rights and duties of a citizen in democracy, road sense and traffic rules and regulations;
- iv) *Religious and moral education:* Rituals and festivals, morale and consciousness; and
- v) *Vocational education:* Basket-making, brickwork, masonry, agriculture, weaving, embroidery, poultry, cobbling, beedi-making, match-industry, candle-making, dairy, poultry, palm leaf products, mat-weaving, etc; wherever possible, women should be encouraged to participate and take up self-employment programmes.

On the whole, the government bodies, that is, central, state and local, voluntary organizations, women associations particularly Mahila Mandals at the grass-root level and the media (both print and electronic media) educational institutions (both formal and non-formal systems) should be geared up to raise the status of women in India.

CHANGING DIRECTIONS IN THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN IN INDIA

G. Stanley Jaya Kumar

Introduction

Women constitute half of the world population and one-third of the official labour force and perform nearly two-thirds of the hour's work but according to some estimates (based on UN and ILO Statistics) received only one-tenth of the world income and possess less than one-hundredth of the world property. Women are called as silent majority, 'pace makers of development', 'better half of the society' and sometimes 'fairer sex' and 'weaker sex', etc.

In India, nearly 85 per cent of the population lives in villages. The heart of India beats in villages. Percentage of rural women to total population is 38.9 and their percentage to the total female population is 80.52 (1944 Census). The contribution of women to the agricultural production, rural development, domestic chores as well as in familial responsibilities is very crucial and vital. But this toilsome and back-breaking work has remained largely invisible to our planners and policy-makers.

TABLE I
**PROJECTED POPULATION BY BROAD
AGE GROUPS AND SEX**

(in percentages)

0-14		15-59		60+	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
41.3	41.6	53.4	53.2	5.3	5.2
37.4	37.9	56.9	56.7	5.7	5.4
34.0	34.4	59.4	59.3	6.6	6.3
31.8	31.8	60.6	60.6	7.6	7.6

The distribution of population (Table 1) shows that by 2001, there will be no difference in the percentages of males and females in the various age groups, which means the life expectancy of both the sexes will show an upward trend.

General Profile of Women

Women are producers, farmers, workers in the households and beyond. They are low paid and need better price for their produce. They are active participants in development but they are illiterate, poor, ignorant, superstitious, subjugated and lack technical skills due to the lack of access to science and technology, information and knowledge, proper training, new employment avenues, income generating assets, information on rights, leadership positions, political power, etc. They are unorganized, unrepresented and continuously suffering from multiple burdens curtailing enrichment and advancement. Paucity of trained women personnel to plan, organize, coordinate, direct, guide and monitor the programmes, lopsided implementation of the programmes, hierarchical social system, traditional social values and patriarchal authority discourage and hinder many women from having interaction with outside world and to organize themselves.

Most of their work is invisible, for example, fetching fuel, collecting water, cooking and child care which are not generally considered as productive labour and they receive no remuneration for their work.

The Status of Women is Always in Flux

In developing countries like India, the issues activating women have implications for only a small group of educated women who have found a new freedom in the life of big cities. For the rest, their role is one of the overt subjugations to the male, whatever the influence exerted from the kitchen and the bedroom. In some societies women are isolated from any direct contact with society at large. These conditions represent both a curtailment of human freedom and a loss to the society of unexploited abilities. To fight for equal educational opportunities for women, for their right to enjoy economic and social freedom along with men, is to fight the centuries-

old taboos which support present inequalities. Often, social scientists, whatever their original anticipations of it, find themselves engaged in the struggle for women's emancipation from the thrall of ancient traditions.

Throughout the ages in every race, religion and culture, women have played a significant and vital role in the family as daughters, sisters, wives and mothers. In enlightened civilizations they have enjoyed certain status by virtue of this role. Even in the less enlightened culture in spite of their subjugation, women have been in fact, if not in word, consciously or unconsciously the custodians of manners and morals in the family, and security within the home.

Whether extolled by poets and writers, lauded by orators and weighed in the balance by sociologists, or whether ignored by society at large, the role the women play is of that degree of importance that the word 'family' has become more or less synonymous with the word 'woman'.

In rural India a woman's role has been even more significant by virtue of the fact that she is almost invariably bound to and confined within the four walls of her home.

In present society, discrimination against women in general is reaching its peak coupled with prejudice and ignorance and relegates her to the position of an inferior being, an object of false pity and mindless charity. Even in her own family she is deprived of her normal role.

The influences, attitudes and stereotyped beliefs by which the women are hemmed by males, will affect their development and personality in various ways and in varying degrees. In spite of violence and brutality, there is more to inculcate in them rather than resignation to fate to accomplish anything else. Their talents and abilities, instead of being developed and cultivated, remain unexplored, unsounded and perhaps even undetected, if not deliberately suppressed or ignored. This deprivation has, naturally, unfortunate psychological repercussions, and inflicts on them the added burden of frustration, self-pity and inhibition.

There has been a traditional tendency in all societies to neglect the weaker sections while marching towards progress and development. By doing so they overlook the fact that they cannot possibly hope to achieve their final goal unless

all sections of society are given an equal opportunity and right to share in this process. The weaker sections usually include women, disabled and poor people. There have been various kinds of exploitation of women at different levels and there has been discrimination against them in various degrees and aspects. They have been the worst victims of prejudice, discrimination, ignorance, disease and poverty.

In our country women play a pivotal role in the family and the community, shouldering all the responsibilities, providing for the needs and comforts of the male members of the family and the children, running the household, managing within the limited budget, suffering from ill-health due to repeated pregnancies and malnutrition, etc. They provide services round the clock without any payment and yet they are considered economically dependent on their husband or father or any other male member of the family. In the rural areas, besides all the household responsibilities, bearing the children and bringing them up, they also work in the fields side by side with their menfolk. Behind the scene, they quietly play a leading role in keeping the family together and maintaining its well-being, thus contributing towards the stability and well-being of the society as a whole. Nevertheless, their status is considered subjugated and dependent. Traditionally they were not given education or training of any kind because they were not supposed to be an earning member of the family. The fact that they are the first institution of training and education for their children, both male and female, and are the chief administrator-cum-manager of their home, has been totally overlooked. As a result, this discrimination and neglect has inflicted incalculable damage to the progress of society as a whole.

The Constitution of India guarantees equality of opportunity and status to men and women. It directs that women shall not only have equal rights and privileges with men but also that the state shall make provisions, both general and special, for the welfare of women.

Notwithstanding the constitutional guarantee, the Committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI) in 1944 undertook a comprehensive examination of all questions relating to the rights and status of women, recognized 'women' as a class, who have been subjected to deprivation,

brutality and extortion. In other words, women who are nearly half the population suffer from many social and economic disadvantages. Culturally also their roles are ill-defined in public participation.

The Government of India have been seriously concerned about the increasing number of incidents being reported in the press and at other forums regarding offences against women. It is felt that such offences are not merely a problem of law enforcement but also are indicative of the disabilities and inequalities from which the women in our country continue to suffer in spite of constitutional provisions for equality, social justice and protection of women. Therefore, the problem in this regard should be considered in a wider social framework, taking into account the various socio-cultural and economic factors that make Indian women more vulnerable to insecurity, exploitation and degradation.

The increase in the stress on women's emancipation without corresponding changes in social attitudes and institutions, sometimes leads to women being subjected to various types of hostile reactions and aggressive postures. Most of the disabilities and constraints on women arise from socio-cultural institutions (realms). The traditional social structure, cultural norms and value systems continue to place Indian women in a situation of disadvantage in terms of role-relationships, decision-making and sharing of responsibilities. Their social status is still surrounded by a variety of institutional complexes, connections and myths, while there is, undoubtedly, a need of greater awareness to release them from their dependence and unequal status in society. The realization of the goals as enshrined in the Constitution of India is still a far cry. Even the social laws which seek to mitigate the problems of women remain largely unknown. As a result, Indian women when in distress are much more insecure than men in similar circumstances.

No government efforts alone can bring about significant results unless people themselves participate and respond to the demands of progress. This is so in the field of women's development. Therefore, improvement in the status of women can be ensured only through their full integration and participation in the task of national development.

Atrocities on Women

A nation's greatness depends on the fact how its women enjoy respect and status in the country. The Hindu mythology says, Srashta (creator of the world) created Shiva and Shakti as source of life, complementary to each other. In ancient days women used to enjoy respect and status equal to those of men. A symbol of purity, chastity and shraddha (reverence) that woman was, had been reduced to an object of lust and enjoyment in the later period. Even the educated girls used to lapse into the role of ordinary housewives after marriage.

The lot of women in India is not improving with faster pace. The incidence of crime against them have been rising sharply. Sordid tales of rape, molestation, kidnapping and abduction and eve-teasing are the daily reminders of their miserable condition. The incidence of dowry-deaths and bride burnings, and female infanticide is actually a black mark on the nation. Besides, there are other innumerable social evils like harassment, violence against women, wife-beating, bigamy, divorce, polyandry, prostitution, sati, child marriages, widowhood, purdah, custodial violence, exploitation by media, etc. Other social and economic issues are added to this despite the constitutional provisions for equality and social justice and protection of women from insecurity, exploitation and degradation. They are continuously being subjected to deprivation, brutality and extortion and suffer from many social and economic disadvantages.

Women are generally pushed into the least remunerative avenues of employment. Many women have been employed as low-paid labourers though they are equally toiling with their male counterparts. Many women have more children than they really want.

Women in the country are regarded no better than 'goods' which can be used, abused, molested, abducted, exploited, hated, raped and even burnt to death. Dehumanization or humiliation of the sex is perhaps as old as human race.

The Factors Responsible for the Changing Status of Women in India

It is from the 19th century that some progressive changes

were observed in the socio-economic status of women in India. Today, there is a rapid transitional period in the status of women in India. The following accounts of changes in the socio-economic status of women mainly focus on this special class of women, the middle class:

1. Among the various environmental and institutional factors contributing to rise in the social position of women in India, the most important have been advances in science, technology and education, national awareness (awareness of one's role in contributing to the nation) and the changes made in law. Consequently, new social roles started emerging both for men and women. Advances in science and technology led to new production processes, occupations and skills, which in turn, led to an increased demand for women labour.
2. Women today enjoy better health and they are better health and hygiene conscious because of the progress in the national health programmes including family planning. As a result, they are not only relieved of their worries and their preoccupations with matters such as too frequent childbirths and health problems of large families, but they can also now afford to invest part of their energies in the activities outside their homes.
3. Changes in the social attitudes of women themselves as well as those of men have been observed due to widespread use of radio, cinema and television and with the spread of books and newspapers.
4. The shift from rural to urban living has also affected changes in the social roles of women. Not only have many women attained relief from the dawn to dusk hardship in the village life, but they have also gained access to increased employment opportunities *vis-a-vis* their higher education.

There are five major factors which contribute to the socio-economic changes.

Legal Changes

The status of women in India has been affected significantly by the different provisions in the law. Till the year 1954, Indian women did not enjoy a very favourable position in the eyes of law, though the Constitution of the Republic

of India guaranteed equality to everyone. It was only in 1955-56, when the Parliament passed statutes reforming the Hindu law relating to marriage and divorce, succession, adoption, minority and guardianship, that Indian women attained a status equal to that of men.

Educational Improvement

Sustained efforts to extend education among women have been made from the First Five Year Plan period. During the Eighth Five Year Plan period the enrolment of girls is expected to increase further through the organization of special programmes, the nature of which will vary from state to state.

Besides the national policy on the education of girls, there have been several other factors which have given impetus to this situation.

1. With the rise in the age of marriage, girls have more time to fill in before getting married, which is more fruitfully occupied in getting further education.
2. There has been a growing tendency among the educated young men to marry educated girls who would fit into their social life.
3. Parents have also been increasingly aware of educating their daughters and making them self-supporting
4. The girls themselves have been showing a keen desire to get higher education as a way to status, assurance and independence.

As a result, not only has the enrolment of girl students at different level of education increased, but also the entry of women in professional courses and at college levels has increased over the years.

Women Employment

Higher education facilitated women's entry into gainful employment. This is more true about the middle class women. In the early days of the present century only women from the lower classes sought outside jobs. The middle and upper class women stayed home, caring for their children and attending to their domestic chores which in many cases was done by the servants who could be hired at nominal

wages. Gradually, women from these classes also started joining the workforce, which to a considerable extent was a result of higher education among the girls. The increasing participation of women in the economic activity in India is reflected by the growth in the number of women employees.

Two interesting trends are noticeable in the employment pattern of women today.

1. In addition to the women from the lower socio-economic strata, women from the middle and upper classes have also started joining the workforce. These women have created what can best be described as 'white collar' workers.
2. In terms of occupational distribution, a majority of women in India are still employed in traditional occupations. Among the different occupational groups, teachers formed the largest group, of again the number of middle and primary school teachers was the largest. Next to the teachers, punch card machine operators formed the largest group followed by nurses, nursing attendants, midwives, and health visitors, and to a much smaller extent, typists, stenographers, telephone operators, labour and social welfare workers and librarians, though one could find Indian women employed as executives, administrators, doctors, lecturers, lawyers, research workers, office workers, etc. Conceivably, the working woman has a measure of dependence on social attitudes prevailing around her.

National Awareness and Participation

The freedom struggle provided women with opportunities to participate in activities outside their homes in the areas of politics and social welfare. The result of this participation of women in the political and social life resulted in their own emancipation. The attitude of male towards women began to change and a woman participating in activities outside the home was no longer something unheard of. The right to vote and to contest in elections was granted to Indian women in the year 1949. Since then women have been exercising their rights. The number of women voters and women contestants has been steadily increasing with each successive election. The difference between men and women in regard to the

proportion of voting is also getting smaller with each successive election. Even, contrary to the earlier times, the number of women voters guided by their own will in choosing a candidate is getting larger over the years. As far as the extent of women elected to political seats and their membership in organized political associations are concerned, they are also steadily increasing.

Factors like education and traditional family system, etc., could account for the interest and participation of women in this field. It has been observed that women from the upper middle and middle classes which, by and large, are the most educated and advanced groups, have made the speedy headway in the political field. It is also among these classes that women have contributed most to the social and cultural life of the country as well as in the field of arts, literature, music, etc.

Role of Women in India

Family Roles and the Changes Brought Therein

The women are supposed to perform many activities in the family. The mother role consists of looking after children and attending their primary needs such as feeding and caring for their health, education, character building, etc.

In addition to these activities related to their family roles some of them are to perform another role, an occupational role, consisting of a number of activities. These two roles might conflict with each other in some respect or other because of two conditions: (i) the need to carry them out in a certain place and at certain time, and (ii) the development of certain attitudes, values and behaviour.

Family Relationships and Marital Harmony

With the participation of a married woman in activities outside the home, certain changes in the respective roles of husband and wife are inevitable. On the other hand with the gradual breaking up of the joint family system a woman needs to participate more in pertaining to family decision-making. A woman still assumes a secondary role in which the superiority and dominance of the male is taken for granted.

Studies on the effect of the wife's gainful employment on marital harmony have not provided conclusive evidence as to the association between a wife's participation in work and marital disharmony. Promila kapur in her book *Marriage and the Working Women in India* points out that it is not merely the fact of a wife being employed that affects marital relationship but the overall change in the attitudes of educated urban women brought about by a variety of factors which are operating almost simultaneously in contemporary Indian society.

Effects on Children

There are two lines of thought on this subject. On the one hand it is said that the children of working mothers tend to become more indisciplined, heading to juvenile crimes, and on the other, it has been observed that the full time housewives tend to be over-protective and dominating. The most decisive factor is the quality of the contact between parents and children rather than their quantities. This implies that the working women can even build proper parent-child relationships taking into consideration the fact that they will have to deprive their children of their presence with them for sometime on account of their jobs outside.

Problems of Role Conflict in Connection with Household Chores

Many women at present have adopted professional as well as familial roles without necessary changes in their role relations with other members of the family. In such a situation the employed women are the victims of conflicting role expectations from professional and domestic sides.

Some studies have shown that the housewife who also holds a job can possibly bring about a measure of integration or adjustment between the two roles. One apparent way would be to modify the work role to suit family role performance which is not opened to most employees. Another approach would be to build up coping facilities to increase the effectiveness of family role performance. This is supplemented by the use of household gadgets like pressure cookers, electric or gas stoves, mixers, etc, which reduce the time needed for certain areas of family role performance, and

improve the quality of the same.

For instance, a majority of prospective housewives reported that they would like to work outside while being housewives though they could not possibly perform both the roles during the infancy of their children. They would take up careers again when their children will grow up sufficiently.

The change accounts given above are, however, far from unmixed blessings. the women in the new socio-economic roles and those in achieving them find a lack of adequate support. For instance, women particularly in rural areas do not have sufficient educational opportunities. The government should provide adequate facilities and support to women in India for economic progress of the country.

Conclusion

Women in the upper strata of society alone are receiving education, often through private tuition and training in certain arts. Many of the occupations are considered suitable only for them. They are enjoying freedom of movement, assembly and entertainment. They are treated with consideration and honour while a majority of women are crushed and confined within the framework of restraints imposed by family status and society at large. Women should be aware of their rights and should organize themselves for a social movement to prove that they are 'Super Women'. The glaring example of this type of success is the 'Anti-arrack movement in Andhra Pradesh'.

It is the reality that men and women are the two wheels of the chariot of life and success of life's journey depends on the stamina and steadfastness of both the wheels.

Women's development as a whole should not be separated from or viewed in isolation from the development of the whole community. "Total development includes development in social, economic, political, cultural and other dimensions of human life as also the physical, moral, intellectual and cultural growth of the person." (Conference report of the UN Decade for Women, Copenhagen 1980). Women's development should be considered as an essential component in every dimension of development.

Changing Directions

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SECTION II

HEALTH AND EDUCATION

ROLE OF WOMEN IN NUTRITIONAL ECOSYSTEMS

Yogananda Sastry Chaturvedi

In the context of the existing social structure in India with its roots in caste system, the disadvantaged segments of the population, namely, the Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Backward Classes (BC) suffer a greater degree of deprivation not only due to poverty, but also because of their cultural beliefs, prejudices, taboos and superstitions which rule their lifestyles in general and health and nutrition practices in particular. Prejudices and taboos have a strong bearing on attitude formation which affects the health and nutrition care of children. To a great extent, attitudes are formed on the basis of the amount of knowledge people have regarding the desirable practices and also the amount of understanding they have about the significance of discarding undesirable practices. The possible solution lies in providing appropriate education. But, before launching an education programme, it is imperative to have a clear understanding of the profile of the people in need of these educational programmes. More often than not, programme planners have a tendency to implement education programmes for health and nutrition separately, little realizing the interrelatedness of health and nutrition and failing to recognize that, after all, they are two sides of the same coin.

At the individual level, poverty undoubtedly plays a pivotal role in determining the extent of availability of dietary ingredients and ability to purchase medical aid. But in addition to these, illiteracy and ignorance stand as barriers to utilization of even the available resources in relation to both health and nutrition care. The advice provided by elderly members in the household and neighbourhood and the services rendered by quacks in matters of any sort of ill-health, work against the vulnerable segments of population, namely, the preschool children and pregnant and nursing women. The members of the disadvantaged groups in general and people with their incomes below poverty line from

the disadvantaged caste group in particular suffer from the problems of ill-health and malnutrition in more severe forms. Also, it is not just the problem of lack of resources, but more due to lack of resourcefulness, that these groups suffer from avoidable ill-health and malnutrition.

Behaviour of an individual is determined by the amount of available knowledge leading to formation of attitudes. Conformity to the traditional practices is one of the characteristics of human behaviour. Apart from the prescriptions regarding behaviour, the economic condition of the individual plays a paramount role in regulating access to information. While illiteracy and lack of knowledge lay foundations, wrong beliefs and notions assume super structures over them. It may be due to these problems that the efforts of health personnel to bring about the change in attitudes have not been bringing about the desired result. Belief system not only influences health care, but also restricts the nutrition care of the community. Traditional concepts regarding food forbid the consumption of many articles, unmindful of their nutritional significance and in spite of their availability.

Age at marriage, if it is earlier than 15 for a girl, adds to the disadvantage arising out of poverty. Early pregnancy is considered a potential cause of high infant and maternal mortality rates. The malnourished young girl who was born to a malnourished mother carrying forward inter-generational malnutrition, invariably gives birth to a baby with low birth weight, more commonly when, childbirth occurs earlier than the 15th year of the girl. In addition to these, lack of knowledge about the availability of medical facilities and the need for immunization of children against common infantile ailments, makes the children more susceptible to infections. Due to poverty, young mothers also go for wage employment. Employment of mothers from among poorer sections does not enable them to pay adequate attention to child care.

Concepts of personal hygiene and environmental sanitation have little significance in the lives of the disadvantaged communities. Studies undertaken earlier in this direction were concentrated either on health or nutrition care *per se* but not together.

The present study was undertaken with a view to under-

standing the knowledge, attitude and practices (KAP), of disadvantaged rural mothers with regard to health and nutrition care of children.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives are as follows:

1. To study the effect of economic development (of a region) on health and nutrition practices of the disadvantaged population;
2. To study the impact of special inputs in regard to health and nutrition care;
3. To study the effect of early marriage and early motherhood on KAP of health and nutrition care of children;
4. To prepare a socio-economic-demographic status (SEDS) index and determine its impact on the KAP; and
5. To prepare a profile of the disadvantaged women in need of health and nutrition intervention programmes.

Study Area

The study was conducted in two states, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Taking into account the economic development of the region, Mysore district representing the well-developed region and Kurnool district to represent the underdeveloped region from Andhra Pradesh were selected. Another consideration was that in the developed region no special health and nutrition inputs were available, whereas in the underdeveloped region chosen, these were made available. In each district five villages were covered and per village 25 respondents were chosen. While selecting the villages, existence of social organizations like Women's Club, Youth Club, Co-operative Society and self-government body at the village in the shape of Panchayat was ensured.

Sample

Two prerequisite criteria guided the selection of sample, namely, the respondent was to be a housewife, and had at least one child in preschool age group.

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Only the women from disadvantaged groups who had their incomes below the poverty line comprised the sample.

**TABLE 1
SAMPLE STUDIED**

Caste Groups	States		Total
	Karnataka	Andhra Pradesh	
BC + ST	50	33	83
BC	67	72	139
Total	117	105	222

For analysis of data, it was felt desirable to develop an index using the following variables:

- i) age at marriage,
- ii) age at first pregnancy,
- iii) spacing between childbirths,
- iv) education level of the respondent,
- v) type of house owned,
- vi) membership in social organizations,
- vii) mass media contact, and
- viii) annual per capita income. Respondents were divided into four SEDS groups, namely high, upper middle, lower middle, low. Scores obtained on KAP were analysed for the SEDS groups.

**TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS
ACCORDING TO SEDS GROUPS**

	Karnataka			Andhra Pradesh		
	BC	SC+ST	Total	BC	SC+ST	Total
Low	15	18	33	17	8	25
Lower Middle	21	15	36	21	11	32
Upper Middle	18	11	29	22	8	30
Higher	13	6	19	12	6	18

TABLE 3
CORRELATION BETWEEN TOTAL SCORES AND ITEM
SCORES ON SELECTED VARIABLES

Variable	Karnataka (N=117)	Andhra Pradesh (N=105)
Age at marriage	0.460	0.511
Age at first pregnancy	0.498	0.263
Spacing between childbirths	0.521	0.331
Education level	0.351	0.294
Type of house owned	0.415	0.301
Membership in social organization	0.332	0.490
Mass media contact	0.157	0.342
Annual per capita income	0.423	0.572

All values were significant at one per cent level except the seventh variable in Karnataka which was significant at five per cent level.

TABLE 4
AGE OF THE RESPONDENT

Age group	Karnataka			Andhra Pradesh		
	BC	SC+ST	Total	BC	SC+ST	Total
20-24	2 (3.0)	6 (12.0)	8 (6.8)	5 (6.8)	3 (9.0)	8 (7.6)
25-29	4 (6.0)	5 (10.0)	9 (7.7)	13 (18.1)	5 (15.2)	18 (17.1)
30-34	9 (13.5)	9 (18.0)	18 (15.4)	13 (18.1)	10 (30.4)	23 (22.0)
35-39	14 (20.8)	3 (6.0)	17 (14.5)	17 (23.6)	5 (15.2)	22 (21.0)
40-44	24 (36.1)	8 (16.0)	32 (27.4)	12 (16.7)	4 (12.1)	16 (15.2)
45-49	14 (20.8)	19 (38.0)	33 (28.2)	12 (16.7)	6 (18.1)	18 (17.1)

Figures in the parentheses are percentages.

In Karnataka quite a few respondents from both BCs and SCs of even 45-59 age group, had preschool age children, whereas, in Andhra Pradesh, this was found in lesser magnitude.

**TABLE 5
AGE AT MARRIAGE**

	Karnataka			Andhra Pradesh		
	BC	SC+ST	Total	BC	SC+ST	Total
9 years and below	3 (4.48)	5 (10.0)	8 (6.83)	10 (13.86)	2 (6.06)	12 (11.42)
10-14	39 (58.2)	31 (62.0)	70 (59.83)	27 (37.5)	16 (48.49)	43 (40.96)
15-19	23 (34.33)	13 (26.0)	36 (30.77)	32 (44.450)	15 (45.45)	47 (44.77)
20-24	2 (2.99)	1 (2.0)	3 (2.57)	3 (4.17)	0 (0.0)	3 (2.85)

Figures in the parentheses are percentages.

It can be inferred that, in Karnataka among the disadvantaged groups, age preferred for marriage of girls was 10-14 years. However, this trend was confined to SCs only in Andhra Pradesh. In the light of the reported figures of Health Statistics of India (1983) infant mortality rate being 141 per 1,000 live births when age at marriage is less than 18 years of the girl, and most mothers studied in both states being less than 18 years at their marriage, it may be imperative to make efforts to educate people about the need for delaying or postponing the marriage up to 18 years.

**TABLE 6
AGE AT FIRST PREGNANCY**

	Karnataka			Andhra Pradesh		
	BC	SC+ST	Total	BC	SC+ST	Total
13 years and below	5 (7.46)	2 (4.0)	7 (5.98)	3 (4.17)	2 (6.06)	5 (4.76)
13-15	11 (16.41)	13 (26.0)	24 (20.57)	17 (23.6)	11 (33.33)	28 (26.67)
16-18	18 (26.87)	28 (50.0)	46 (39.3)	27 (37.61)	7 (21.21)	34 (32.29)
19-21	16 (23.89)	6 (12.0)	22 (18.8)	17 (23.6)	10 (30.31)	27 (25.72)
22-24	8 (11.95)	0 (-)	8 (6.83)	5 (6.85)	2 (6.06)	7 (6.66)
25-27	5 (7.46)	1 (2.0)	6 (5.12)	3 (4.17)	1 (3.03)	4 (3.8)
28 and above	4 (5.96)	0 (-)	4 (3.4)	0 (-)	0 (-)	0 (-)

Figures in the parentheses are percentages.

A majority of the respondents from both states were in the age group 16 to 18 years at the time of their first pregnancy. However, in both states a few instances of pregnancy occurring earlier than their 15th year came to light.

TABLE 7
SPACING BETWEEN CHILDBIRTH

Age	Karnataka			Andhra Pradesh		
	BC	SC+ST	Total	BC	SC+ST	Total
Less than one year	2 (2.98)	1 (2.0)	3 (2.56)	0 (-)	0 (-)	0 (-)
12-18	36 (53.71)	16 (32.0)	52 (44.45)	31 (43.05)	6 (18.19)	37 (35.26)
19-24	11 (16.4)	11 (22.0)	22 (18.81)	27 (37.5)	18 (54.54)	45 (42.86)
25-30	12 (17.97)	13 (26.0)	25 (21.37)	7 (9.73)	4 (12.12)	11 (10.48)
31-36	2 (2.98)	1 (2.0)	3 (2.56)	2 (2.73)	1 (3.03)	3 (2.86)
37-42	2 (2.98)	6 (12.0)	8 (6.83)	2 (2.73)	1 (3.03)	3 (2.86)
43 and more	2 (2.98)	2 (4.0)	4 (3.42)	3 (4.16)	3 (9.09)	6 (5.71)

Figures in the parentheses are percentages.

Average spacing between childbirths was one to one and a half year in general.

A majority of the respondent families had no land of their own and were engaged either in agriculture or labour.

The respondents were mostly illiterate in both states. Respondents by and large had relatively less mass media contact and had membership in one or two of the rural organizations.

Health-Nutrition Care Knowledge (within caste groups between States)

A comparison of mean scores among each one of the SEDS groups, (Table 8) revealed that in the total sample, respondents from Andhra Pradesh had better health and

TABLE 8
HEALTH-NUTRITION CARE KNOWLEDGE

SEDS	BC		SC+ST		Total	
	Karnataka	Andhra Pradesh	Karnataka	Andhra Pradesh	Karnataka	Andhra Pradesh
Low Mean	15.60	18.82 *	16.00	15.50	15.82	17.26 *
SD	1.76	5.05	2.34	1.37	2.20	1.55
N	15	17	18	8	33	25
Lower Middle Mean	15.38	17.24 *	15.53	17.55	15.44	17.34 **
SD	2.11	2.96	2.34	1.73	3.45	1.93
N	21	21	15	11	36	32
Upper Middle Mean	15.22	18.09 **	15.00	16.63	15.14	17.70 **
SD	1.63	3.46	3.33	1.84	2.72	1.68
N	18	22	11	8	29	30
High Mean	15.46	18.83 **	14.17	17.67	15.05	18.44 **
SD	1.20	1.99	5.18	3.37	1.75	2.12
N	13	12	6	6	19	18
F-ratio	0.13	0.79	1.62*	1.07	1.04	0.40

** Significant at 0.01 level *Significant at 0.05 level.

nutrition care knowledge than their counterparts in Karnataka. High SEDS groups had, however, higher levels of health and nutrition care knowledge in Andhra Pradesh and low SEDS in Karnataka gave evidence of this.

Across the states, among each one of the SEDS groups and within caste groups, BCs in Andhra Pradesh from all SEDS groups had better health-nutrition care knowledge than the other groups from Karnataka.

In all SEDS groups excepting the low SEDS, SCs of Andhra Pradesh had better health and nutrition care knowledge.

In sum, both SCs and BCs of Andhra Pradesh had a better health nutrition care knowledge than their counterparts in Karnataka. This may be attributed to the special inputs for health and nutrition care made available in the study area of Andhra Pradesh.

Attitude to health-nutrition care: It is evident from the Table 9 that respondents from Andhra Pradesh maintained a more favourable attitude to Health and Nutrition Care. In the upper middle SEDS, however, respondents from Karnataka secured higher mean scores indicating a more favourable attitude to health-nutrition care. Caste-wise, SEDS-wise analysis revealed similar trends among BCs. However, among SCs, excepting in the lower middle SEDS group; respondents from Andhra Pradesh secured higher mean scores and in the remaining SEDS groups, respondents from Karnataka secured higher scores. It may be inferred that among BCs, respondents from Andhra Pradesh and among SCs respondents from Karnataka maintained a more favourable attitude to Health Nutrition care.

Health-Nutrition Care Practices

Respondents belonging to Andhra Pradesh from all SEDS groups gave evidence of better health and nutrition care practices than their counterparts in Karnataka (Table 10). Respondents from low SEDS in both states had better practices as evidenced in the total samples and within the SEDS groups.

When mean scores were compared within the caste groups across the states and each one of the SEDS groups,

TABLE 9
ATTITUDE TO HEALTH -NUTRITION CARE

SEDS	BC			SC+ST			Total		
	Karnataka	Andhra Pradesh	't'	Karnataka	Andhra Pradesh	't'	Karnataka	Andhra Pradesh	't'
Low Mean	24.73	28.35		27.22	26.38		26.09	27.72	
SD	5.23	5.80	1.84	4.28	8.05	0.35	4.82	6.50	1.10
N	15	17		18	8		33	25	
Lower Middle Mean	26.52	27.81		27.73	28.36		27.03	28.00	
SD	5.70	5.84	0.72	3.94	3.96	0.40	5.01	5.21	0.78
N	21	21		15	11		36	32	
Upper Middle Mean	27.61	26.86		28.73	25.13		28.03	26.40	
SD	6.87	6.02	0.37	6.03	5.72	1.31	6.48	5.89	1.01
N	18	22		11	8		29	30	
High Mean	24.46	29.08		31.33	25.83		26.63	28.00	
SD	4.43	4.38	2.63*	4.63	6.01	1.78	5.46	5.05	0.79
N	13	12		6	6		19	18	
F-ratio	1.09	0.45		1.27	0.52		0.68	0.51	

* Significant at 0.05 level.

TABLE 10
HEALTH AND NUTRITION CARE PRACTICES

SEDS	BC				SC+ST				Total			
	Karnataka		Andhra Pradesh		Karnataka		Andhra Pradesh		Karnataka		Andhra Pradesh	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Low	32.67	4.35	42.71	7.12	33.44	5.45	42.38	6.93	33.09	4.92	42.60	6.12
SD												
N	15	17	7.12	4.73	18	8	3.55	8	33	25		
Lower Middle	32.95	6.39	43.48	9.44	31.87	4.82	39.73	10.71	32.50	5.74	42.19	5.01
Mean												
SD												
N	21	21	4.23	1.1	15	11	2.53	11	36	32		
Upper Middle	31.61	4.43	42.36	8.40	33.36	6.20	39.38	6.72	32.28	5.14	41.57	5.08
Mean												
SD												
N	18	22	4.89	11	8	8	2.02	8	29	30		
High Mean	30.92	3.17	41.00	5.08	31.83	2.93	37.17	7.68	31.21	3.05	39.72	5.40
SD												
N	13	12	6.00	6	6	6	1.59	6	19	18		
F-ratio	0.58	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.36	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.58	0.50		

** Significant at 0.01 level * Significant at 0.05 level.

it was found that respondents from Andhra Pradesh irrespective of caste groups and SEDS categories secured better scores in this aspect. Contrary to the findings in the total sample, among BCs from both states, lower middle SEDS respondents secured higher scores on health nutrition care practices. However, among SCs, respondents from low SEDS fared better which was in keeping with the trend found in the total sample. These observations further strengthen the argument that special inputs in regard to health-nutrition care when made available, contribute significantly to the practices. This trend was not found in Karnataka region which had the advantage of better economic development.

It may be possible that mothers from low SEDS face lesser number of restrictions than the higher SEDS groups of mothers in regard to health and nutrition care of children. A mother who is ignorant but still feeds the child something besides taking preventive care, is better placed than a mother who is knowledgeable, but abstains from feeding or providing preventive care due to belief system or adverse attitudes.

Other Salient Findings

Respondents from Andhra Pradesh provided indication of better health-nutrition care practices. All the same, respondents from low SEDS among them adopted better health and nutrition care practices.

Contrary to general expectation, higher levels of knowledge have not brought about desired change in attitudes, but improved the practices; which could be attributed to the special inputs in Andhra Pradesh. The implication could be, that for bringing about change in attitude, longer exposure to special inputs may be imperative.

A negative attitude to feeding colostrum and a more positive attitude to initiating breast-feeding on the first day of childbirth, were observed in both the states. Discarding colostrum is undesirable from the nutrition point of view.

Irrespective of caste and SEDS groups, in both the states pregnant women were not consuming additional diets to meet the requirements of stress due to pregnancy.

Supplementation for weanings was started from one to

one and a half years of age of the child in both the states. Ideally, it should be done from the third month of childbirth.

In addition to poverty which is a major constraint on dietary intake, some of the practices having their roots in custom, tradition and cultural values, also contribute to the lowered dietary intake of vulnerable segments of population.

The general expectation that better knowledge leads to more favourable attitudes resulting in better practices was not found true with the present sample.

Respondents from Karnataka had lesser amount of desirable knowledge in both health and nutrition care: they had a more favourable attitude to health care but not nutrition care. It is tantamount to saying that better knowledge had not brought much change in attitude, but had influenced practices.

Disadvantaged groups in general and women from these groups in particular, have not benefited from the percolation effects of development programmes as evidenced in their KAP on relative health and nutrition care of children.

Occupation of respondent and nutrition care knowledge were found inversely related. Creation of creche facilities in rural areas deserves better attention.

Age at first pregnancy and education level of respondent were found influencing attitude to nutrition care in both the states. Advising postponement of pregnancy to a right age is imperative.

Nutrition care practices and occupation of respondent were found inversely related.

While in Karnataka the influence of health-nutrition knowledge on its practices was not clearly established, evidence of positive influences was found in Andhra Pradesh.

In Andhra Pradesh knowledge on health care was found to be positively influencing attitude to health care.

As for the profile of the rural women needing health and nutrition care intervention programmes, the following characteristics emerged:

- i) Getting married before 15 years of age;
- ii) Pregnancy before the girl attains 15 years of age;
- iii) Inter-pregnancy interval tending to be less than 24 months;

- iv) Primary or below standard in literacy level;
- v) Limited exposure to social organizations;
- vi) Limited mass media contact;
- vii) Living in insanitary conditions;
- viii) Wage earners (employed);
- ix) Having more than three children; and
- x) Having income below poverty line and irrespective of caste group to which they belong.

Implications

Studies on KAP of people provide an understanding of the existing situation in relation to specific aspects. Before launching any long term programme aimed at improving knowledge, bringing about change in attitude and improving the practices, it is imperative to assess the existing situation. This can lead to need-based planning. Inadequate or improper knowledge can influence the direction and intensity of attitudes and find expression in undesirable practices. KAP is a handy tool in understanding the complexity of the situation.

While other things like income, literacy and environment remained equal, caste was the only factor drawing a distinction between backward class and scheduled caste respondents.* Results of the present study clearly indicated that in none of the behavioural dimensions studied, did caste *per se* make any difference. Hence, it can be inferred that health-nutrition programmes should include all the people below the poverty line irrespective of the caste group to which they belong.

There is an urgent need for a comprehensive medical care special inputs package to be launched. The programme should include simultaneous efforts to improve KAP in relation to health and nutrition care. The programme should be specially oriented to ameliorate the conditions of the disadvantaged groups in general and more particularly women in reproductive age groups.

In order to improve the health-nutrition care practices it

* Matching was not done for caste but was done for other variables.

is imperative to improve the mass media contact to enable them to understand the importance of delaying the marriage of girls. It may be added that enrolment of girls in schools could be improved by motivating the parents as well as the children. This would help in the long run in delaying the marriage to the desirable extent gradually.

The significance of delaying marriage should be explained properly. The complications and consequences of early pregnancy should also be explained in categorical terms to the disadvantaged groups.

Disadvantaged groups need special encouragement to enrol themselves in the social organizations. To make it more purposeful, adult education programmes should invariably include child care and care of pregnant and nursing women in the curriculum. The social organizations at the village level should be utilized as the centres for the adult education programme.

In the light of the available evidence where higher levels of knowledge have not brought about much change in attitudes but influenced the practices, it would be rewarding to provide exposure for longer duration to find change in attitude also.

DEVELOPMENT AND POPULATION GROWTH IN INDIA

Issues of Women and Fertility for Ideology and Action

D. Sundaram

Curious bedmates as they are, population and development draw the attention of the social and medical scientists, bureaucrats, planners and political agents in varied forms. In its thrust to assist developing countries, population concerns are being integrated into the development planning policies and programmes. With such thrusts in population control programme, the need for evaluation of the development programmes for the organization of family planning efforts appear to be relevant.

In this context, the knowledge of population control and population growth may be considered. Broadly, the knowledge of population control programme may be divided into the contribution of classical thinkers, the economic models of fertility as well as the sociological models of fertility (S.C. Gulati, S.P. Gupta, 1944).

The Classical Thinkers

The scholarship relating to classical thinkers like Malthus, Ricardo, Notestin, Thompson, Landry has broadly emphasized the implications of population growth and also the conditioning forces on it. To put it otherwise, a seminal thinking on the relationship between population and development process has been advanced by them. The debunking of these classical thinkers on population and development may be subsumed into a war between natural law (scarcity of natural resources) and population growth and cultural features (that is, the technology of family planning and social and health inputs).

The programmed account of population control actions

and policies of various national and international agencies in the last four decades provide voluminous literature on the actual operational factors which are mainly described as economic and social factors influencing population growth, specifically fertility behaviour. The exercise is such that there is an apparent imbalance in the efforts which tend to emphasize greatly on fertility and less on migration and mortality. Being the force of population control programmes, the fertility reduction or regulation factors that have been identified are those of development of institutions, norms and values among the individuals and groups in a given society. Rather cultural and economic development have been considered to be the major thrusts of factors of fertility regulation.

The Economic Models of Fertility: Beyond the focus of the relationship between income and fertility regulation, there is a familiar consideration of the value of children and fertility (Blake, : Becker, 1960; Schultz, and Liebenstein,

). Keeping the child as an utility model and extending it within the framework of the work-needs of the family, income and expenditure expectations, old age help and social security, these studies established an analytical model for looking at the fertility regulation. These studies with a heavy slant of economic basis of household formation have had an extensive debate with cross national and family based empirical evidences within the two broad models of fertility behaviour, that is, Pennsylvania School Model and Chicago-Columbia School Model.

The caution that has been voiced in these models may be varied in nature, both on behalf of the propounders of the economic bases of fertility behaviour in terms of their methodological and conceptual issues and in terms of their exclusiveness in the focus of their concepts of demography and economics, while there is a scope for looking into these frameworks from the point of view of social, institutional and cultural variables and contexts (Victor D'Souza, : Beaujout, : Hernsohn,).

Sociological Models of Fertility: Relating the change in fertility behaviour of a given population to norms, sanctions, social structure, organizations and institutions, it is considered that they provide a specific assumption for fertility differentials

in terms of social classes and social groups.

While this is so, the programme evaluation groups concentrating on the interventionist approaches to regulate fertility have embarked on various field studies which may be classified into evaluation and exploratory studies. The evaluation studies concentrating on the programme inputs have analysed the acceptors and their action-potency with regard to fertility regulations. The exploratory studies are mostly pace-setters for programme promoters. To be precise, population control programme often considers educational development as a natural corollary of triggering mechanism to raise age at marriage in order to limit the number of children. In between the education and limiting the number of children, the issues like participation in labour force, acceptance of family planning methods and rationality behind the choice of the number of children are the key factors which centre around the concept of development.

Women's Education and Fertility Regulation

The National Sample Survey of rural and urban areas, Bangalore city study of Edwin Driver's study of fertility differentials in central India and similarly the study of Lucknow city by Hussain reveal the trend of relationship between education and fertility. In these studies, educational status is said to be influencing the socio-economic development in that it accelerates social status attainment, exposure to ideas of wider choices of economic and social concern and off-familial commitment and proving thus to be the conditioning factors that limit family size. The Maridelbaum () study, highlighting the explanation of the fertility differentials by the average age at the consummation rather than the age at effective marriage, provides that there are evidences to show the serial and cumulative effects between education, age at marriage and employment leading to fertility regulation. Neither the postponement of age at marriage enabling one to have education and consequent employment nor the compulsion of higher education and consequent employment enabling one to raise one's age at marriage are the only factors. These interrelated factors contribute to produce a shorter span of

reproduction and also motivation to have a desired family size.

Coming to the specificities of women's education and fertility, the selected findings from the world fertility survey (Mary Beth Weinberger, 1987) show a social construction of the reality of such a relationship. Forty-four per cent of the population of the countries surveyed are illiterates while 30 per cent among the 7 per cent of the population had under 10 years of schooling, 12 per cent had between one and nine years, 22 per cent between four and six years and 13 per cent between one and three years. There are also countries like Yemen with 98 per cent illiteracy and Jamaica with 2 per cent illiteracy. In these two countries of extreme literacy levels, 88 per cent of women in Jamaica had between one and nine years of schooling and 10 per cent of the women with 10 and more years of schooling and only 2 per cent of the women in Yemen are with four to six years of schooling.

On the same count, these studies show that the decline in current and completed fertility is seen with the increase in education. On an average, the fertility differences among women with no education and those with seven or more years of schooling appeared to be 2.3 children among the oldest women and 3 children among total number of women. Further, the prevalence of such differences is seen in most of relatively economically developed countries. Although all educated groups have shown decline in fertility in the former countries but only the group with several years of education has shown fertility decline in the less developed countries. A similar trend has been seen in the use of contraception and in the age at marriage.

Indian Experience

Coming back to India, the Population Council Working Paper on the Primary Education of Women and Fertility Reduction (Anuradha Jain and Moni Nag, 1985) has taken an analytical exercise to understand how women's education can be one of the most powerful indicators of fertility decline both at the national and at the regional level. In this context, an effort has also been made to identify the role of women's education among individual eligible couples in determining the fertility behaviour. Acknowledging the inadequacy of the

theoretical framework of social and biological determinants of fertility, they have extensively used data profile of different levels of women's education in India and different levels of fertility indicators along with the intervening and proximate variables of individual couples' social, cultural, institutional and demographic nature for formulating a conceptual framework. Consequently, the educational policy and planning for women in India have been scrutinized and thus a policy solution of the educational thrust for women has been suggested.

Anuradhi Jain and Moni Nag (1986), in a different paper but on the same subject, have stated that it is necessary to consider the antenatalistic measures of educational policy from a long-term perspective as the population problem is not a short-term phenomenon. They also make two recommendations:

1. The educational policies in India, as far as fertility reduction is concerned and perhaps for other aspects of development as well, should give higher priorities towards increase in female primary education.
2. Educational policies can reduce fertility and this effect can be enhanced by allocating disproportionately higher resources for primary education of women, emphasizing on the reduction of currently prevalent high drop-out rates from primary school.

In another context, Moni Nag (1984), drawing equity-fertility hypothesis as explanation for the fertility differentials in Kerala and West Bengal, has reflected on social justice hypothesis of demographic transition.

The uniqueness of larger decline of fertility in Kerala compared to any other state in India has been attributed to the specific state programmes of Kerala Government in distributing equitable educational and health services besides the reduction of the inequalities in income and wealth. The authenticity of the findings is evident in the similarities of political policies of the states of Kerala and West Bengal. Confining to women's education, the article has taken somewhat different focus on educational level when compared to other studies mentioned earlier.

The importance of primary education compared to other levels of education and the importance of women's education

compared with men's education have been chosen as indicators of inequities in educational opportunities. Sixty-nine per cent of the population in Kerala were literate when compared to 41 per cent in West Bengal and 37 per cent in India. Eighty-six per cent of children of the age group 6-10 were enrolled in Kerala in while during the same year only 68 per cent were enrolled in West Bengal. The educational status of men and women in Kerala have shown a narrower gap, and as such distinctly different from that of all India and West Bengal. It is said that in a survey conducted in . 86 per cent of the girls were enrolled when compared to 82 per cent of the boys in Kerala in the age group of six to ten years. The percentage of literate women in Kerala in the year happened to be 65 while it was 30 and 25 in West Bengal and India, respectively. Now Kerala has attained 100 per cent literacy level.

In an econometric analysis of fertility in Delhi metropolis (S.C. Gupta,) the survey has delineated 34 variables. Among other factors, women's education and employment have been suggested as determining the fertility behaviour and the choice of family size in the long run, particularly in the age group of 25-29 years. Women's education, the creation of job opportunities for them and increasing their wage-income may have a definite impact on family size, as the direct methods of curbing fertility can come handy by increasing interval and hence the fertility realization is postponed only when they are preceded by proper education and employment opportunities for women. Hence, a policy thrust has to be on women's education.

K.E. Vidyanathan in his Indian case study of status of women and family planning has, like Gigibai in , suggested that women's education along with an increased age at marriage and women's work participation has the strongest relationship to the adoption of family planning. He has cautioned at the same time not to go merely on simple statistical relationship but suggested the need for demonstrated causal relationship between schooling, work participation and age at marriage.

The association of fertility decline with the educational level of women by a WHO observation has been cited to drive home the fact that the total fertility rate of literate women is lower than that of the illiterate women by 25 per cent in rural

and 35 per cent in urban areas. Among women with the education of matriculation, the reduction in TFR is 48 per cent in rural areas and 53 per cent in urban areas. The same WHO study has been cited for the fact that not only the participation in workforce shows the decline in fertility but also the kind of workforce in which they are involved has a definite impact.

A study by the Council for Social Development on family planning in the three states of Haryana, Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya (B. Mukherji) can be cited for the variations in the dimensions of the status of women which include educational level, proportion employed and participation in community life and their impact on the role in decision-making by women in the adoption of family planning.

All these studies show distinctively that the investment in the education of women is an investment in the success of the family planning programme, leading to a reduction in fertility in general. The women's education by its variation in the levels of schooling and associated with the rural-urban background has a definite contributory role in reducing fertility.

Women's Education, Employment and Fertility Behaviour

There are also certain other articulated findings in terms of education of a woman as a wife, and the education of husband and their parents and also their children, which appear to have a significant effect on the desired and actual number of children the couples have. The educational attainment of women is said to be enhancing the women's earning capabilities, development of taste for modern consumption standards and augmenting the family's income and having a significant effect on the reproductive career of women, that is, an important bearing on fertility and contraceptive behaviour. Women's education coupled with employment seems to have a total effect on fertility. On the other hand, more explicitly, the statements have been made on women's education as a corollary to women's status providing a scope for positive role in decision-making, women's perceived status in the community and interspousal communication for a positive fertility regulated behaviour.

The family welfare planning programmes, being women-oriented, suggest several socio-economic inputs, the political power, income generating opportunities for women and also women's independent thinking on the issues in which they play a significant role.

Among all these observations, Anurad K. Jain and Moni Nag's schematic presentation of causal links between education and fertility highlight women's education as a development input, leading to several proximate determinants like demand for children, costs of contraception and use of contraception and age at marriage on the actual fertility. S.C. Gulati observes the fact that the women's education bears a substantial inhibition on cumulative fertility. It is a point to be pondered over.

Women's education, according to Gulati, increases the open birth interval and promotes effective contraception all along the reproductive career. Similarly, women's employment in higher occupational categories has a small but inhibitive impact on cumulative fertility as well as desire for children while it has a significant and promotive impact on the effect of contraception. Women in employment would like to consider the spacing of children, postponing pregnancy or increasing the period between pregnancies and would prefer to have fewer children. Also his assumption that the higher education of the woman as a wife may lead to higher earnings in the market and thus a higher opportunity cost for her time in bearing and caring of children is based on the fact that she assumes the role of a mother to fulfil the time-input requirements in the production of child services. In such a context, the woman with higher levels of education will tend to have lesser number of children because of the higher service cost of her time. To put it simply, the higher educated mothers may concentrate on improving the equality of children rather than their number. Thus a judicious mix of policies of educating women and providing employment for women together with family planning methods for family size control may be expected to yield an effective family size and spacing of children.

In associating women's education and employment with the status of women, K.E. Vidyanathan has drawn certain development proposals as he finds that the acceptance of

family planning has enhanced the above context. According to him, education or else the appropriate employment opportunities, particularly through a positive discrimination in favour of women in certain types of occupation which are culturally appropriate for Indian women, may be expected to enhance the women's role in decision-making and leading substantially to the actions towards reduction in fertility.

To substantiate the fact that the population control programmes have reached a saturated level in programmed thrust in the creation of knowledge, provision of supply and support for adoption, it may be stated that a threshold of development orientation for individualized action, namely, education and employment for women, is a developmental initiative in population control programmes.

This only corroborates what Moni Nag has suggested. Most studies that have tried to determine the effect of family planning programmes on fertility have found that programme effort alone does not bear effect but beyond that, the society's general level of development has a role in fertility decline. Thus the conceptual issue in this regard is that the development programme specifically geared for women and that too particularly for the specific age groups of eligible women in the reproductive span becomes a policy thrust for population control programmes. It may be said otherwise that all the development programmes like education and employment services in all the planning programmes need to have specific goals of reaching women.

Development of women being a catalytic factor in achieving the goals of population control programmes in India, their development through education and employment requires serious consideration for an academic evaluation. The women studies programmes sponsored by the University Grants Commission, the establishment of universities for women and the political will of the state to improve the status of women are the positive conditions for a greater understanding of the development of women in India.

The reproductive process is, however, to be studied in this context and beyond the biological one, as it is within the socio-cultural realm. The knowledge and scholarship in women's studies should have a judicious mix of feminist ideology for action relating to the development of women. So,

there is an urgent need to capture the realities centering around gender issues concerning women and work, women and their choices, women and the structure of socialization and ultimately women and motherhood.

This kind of emphasis on the need to integrate the Woman's Question from the point of view of feminist theory in the formulation of development services for women is very important. The existing programme of education and employment without the concern for the above perspectives will no longer be a core input and will remain at the periphery only. Ultimately, the development of women will be from the point of view of established notion of man. Nancy Birdsall's analysis of women and population studies (1975) could not be more relevant for the discussion here. In highlighting the understanding of why women in the underdeveloped countries have more children, Nancy Birdsall developed a simple model for an extremely complex relationship between the women's issue and fertility behaviour by pointing out the psychological as well as socio-economic variables which needed to be taken into account in explaining relationship of women labour force participation with fertility behaviour. This correlation is becoming more relevant as it is said to be the dimension of husband-wife congruity on divergence of fertility decisions. It is said to provide an ultimate reality of the situation.

In an assertive feminist perspective, through an article on Feministic Perspectives in some Ethical Issues in Population Programmes, Sandra S. Tangri (1977) has said that women should be paramount in the area of fertility. Encouragement of liberating social changes and control by women over their own reproductive capacity are some of the other viewpoints.

The entire question of taking the development of women with an undifferentiated concept in the context of differentiation or discrimination between men and women and also among women themselves, namely, rural and urban and traditional and modern, has to be critically evaluated. In such a background, the women with differential opportunity, choices and structures, tend to become mutilated by the undifferentiated notions of the men's concept of family and work for the women. Women are full participants in all

the processes of social change in spite of the fact that they are evaluated differentially when compared to men. The feminists assume that the contemporary development efforts do mean that the families are being viewed in a way which implies that men alone support the family.

It is very important in this context to consider the New Home Economic Theory of Fertility in all its relevance within the framework of feminist perspectives. The employment practices in many countries are being viewed such that the women's role in employment should consider the equity relationship between the contribution of men and women. The women members also have to be reckoned as the mother, wife and a worker in the family.

The framework of development planning for women in the field of education and employment within the family has been formulated by Hanna Papanek (1987). The people concerned about high rates of population growth and scarce resources have to recognize the importance of such feminist ideology in the development planning for women. Researches established in this context provide much information with important implications for women, as development planning for women in population control programmes should be a struggle for liberation of women from the secondary role and status and not for sexual liberation. Accordingly, women's education and their participation in work are vital to the development of family as well as for the realization of their status consciousness.

To elaborate further, the economic analysis of the wage-labour concept for women has to be within the meaning of the resources that women contribute in their labour and not in the meaning of an additional source for the support of men in their family. In industrial societies, the framework given is of some importance when compared to the modernized agricultural economies. In this context, women are not only marginalized; it is said that they are socially marginalized. For this only, an interactionalistic approach has been suggested. The interactionalistic approach links social status attainment of women in work and family through education. Also, it emphasizes no discrimination between men and women.

The feminist perspectives of women's development and

family planning have generally substantiated that mere education and employment for women will not be sufficient to enhance the status and liberation from their subordination and enable them to take a meaningful decision for fertility reduction. In the same way, the entire question of the biological reproduction process in the family formation will be mute in responding to mere education and employment when the women's subordination in work and family are within the perceptions and realities of men. The suggestion of liberated motherhood, the choices of women being localized within their perception, the division of labour with no gender hierarchy and a structure of socialization suited to the meaning of female autonomy by the feminist scholars do require very serious consideration by the researchers for translating these ideologies into action.

Towards this end, the UNFP had organized a training programme at the global level to enhance the capabilities of mid-career professionals of the developing countries for incorporating women's development programme in the family planning exercise. These professionals included macro-economic and planning units, ministries of education, health and social development, agricultural planning and industries and also the population programme officers at the field level. This training programme had been planned to give special attention to women in increasing their opportunities to participate in development as decision-makers, planners and community workers.

In the process, there had also been an attempt to link these efforts at raising the status of women. It is said that in carrying out dual productive and reproductive roles, women require special attention to their needs as mothers, daughters, wives and economic partners within the family. Also it has been recognized that the nutritional, social and economic demands made upon them in their dual capacity have relevance in the family planning programme.

A training workshop in the population control programmes is really an opportunity where feminists, development planners, economists of Home Economics Theory and social scientists can join together to give an action framework for their new ideology on women, population and development.

CLASS, STATUS AND DECISION- MAKING AMONG WOMEN IN FAMILY PLANNING

D. Jayalakshmi
and
V.S. Raghmini

Introduction

There are compelling reasons, today, to view women's development as an essential component in every dimension rather than an issue in social development. With the convergence of the World Population Year in [redacted] and International Women's Year in [redacted], development thinkers have shown serious concern to establish the link between population factor and development process with a far greater degree of women's participation. The World Population Plan of Action

declared that one important way to moderate fertility is through the integration of women in the developmental process by means of their participation in educational, economic, social and political opportunities and by the removal of obstacles to their employment in non-agricultural sector. Education, employment, income and social participation are the important variables determining the status of women which in turn has a bearing on fertility regulation. These status variables empower women with autonomy and decision-making power and hence these are considered as the development resources for women. Thus, the status of women is assumed as the degree of women's control over resources like education, employment, income and social participation. With higher status, women have greater access to means of production and higher degree of autonomy leading to joint decision-making in fertility control (Knodel, [redacted]). There is a direct relationship between the status of women and decision-making.

Tangible Resources and Decision-making Power

When women have access and control over tangible

resources such as education, occupation, income and social participation, their decision-making power in the adoption of family planning is enhanced. Women's education represents an important aspect of women's ability to acquire and possess the potential for gainful employment. Since education provides opportunities for personal advancement, awareness of social mobility, a new outlook, freedom from tradition and the growth of rationalization, educated women have greater degree of decision-making power with regard to adoption of family planning (Dandekar, 1965). Women with higher levels of education have more crystallized norms of family size (Ball and Klemmack, 1984), favourable attitude towards spacing of births and birth control methods (Choudhury, 1989), increased age at marriage (Sather et al., 1988) and increased intra-spouse communication with the induction of self efficacy (Department of International Economic and Social affairs, United Nations, 1983). Thus education, besides generating earning potential for women, widens their horizon of information by broadening their network of communication and induces them to limit their fertility.

Women's employment represents their access to financial and financial resources, control over income and their contributions to household. Employment provides women with alternative satisfaction to children such as social and economic rewards which compete with their child rearing activities and induce them to regulate fertility (Kasarda, 1971). Role incompatibility of working women has a strong positive relationship with fertility regulation and contraception (Weller, 1969). It is also observed that high degree of work commitment and the consequent socio-economic rewards compel employed women to seek smaller families and adopt family planning methods. Further, every additional child increases the opportunity cost of working mother in terms of experience, career advancement and income foregone during child bearing and child rearing periods. Employed women, by their ability to share family budget, strengthen their position in family and fortify autonomy in family decisions. All these encourage employed women to seek smaller families and practice birth control.

Social participation outside home provides women with

information and enhances their social status. They gain self-confidence as well as decision-making power. The overall social support provided by the social network enables women to make favourable decisions on family planning (Kar and Talbot, 1980). Thus, these status variables determining the status of women act as resources for women and provide a power base with which they can gain decision-making powers in all family matters, including family planning.

Status Resources and Socio-Economic Constraints

It is established beyond doubt that education, occupational status, income and social participation are the significant status variables determining decisions on family planning. The same perspective does not hold true for Indian society where power cannot be defined strictly in terms of resources.

Status of Indian women has changed for the better, as exemplified in the statistical profile. But, paradoxically, reproductive behaviour in India reflects the oppressive social reality, in which, women give birth to children by compulsion as marriage imposes, rather than by choice. In Indian social system, where ascribed status continues to govern individual's position in family and patriarchal norms entail husband with all the decision-making power irrespective of resources he possesses. Women are restrained from translating their earning into power. Though women are given power to decide on family size, it is not uncommon to see the pervasive influence of patriarchal ideologies that are strictly enforced, rather than in their own interest. This social reality may be well explained by the demographic phenomenon that large family size is the characteristic feature of lower income groups in which women are economically active. These women most often equally share economic burden of families and they are not actually without decision-making power. But it is their perception of value of child and role rewards that influence their decisions with regard to family planning.

Status resources may bring more decision-making power, but the extent to which women could make use of these resources is defined by class related social factors. Thus, hidden behind the demographic factors and theories of

developmental specialists are the perception of women on value of child and gender role.

Class, Role Attitudes and Value of Child

In lower socio-economic classes, women are predominantly engaged in unorganized sector employment or in farms or in cottage industries, where there is no guarantee of permanent employment and no provisions are made for old age security. In such families, women look up to their children, especially sons, for future security and old age support. Thus, family size norms tend to correspond to the net utility to be derived from children as economic assets and social security agents. Further, children in these families provide economic assistance to parents, help with arduous domestic chores and look after their younger siblings. In addition to these, flexibility of their work environment enables working mothers to carry on their child rearing activities in their workspot. The nature of employment, in which these women are engaged demand neither responsibility nor work commitment. Child rearing, thus, poses no threat to gainful employment of working women of lower economic classes.

On the other hand, desire for quality children, improved standards of living and self-betterment make the women of higher income groups to perceive the higher cost of children, which in turn induce them to control their family size. Employed women of this class derive alternative satisfaction to children from their employment. Their economic role competes with another role and their career aspirations make it impossible to have larger families.

Thus, different classes representing different patterns of value and cost of child have direct bearing on the decision-making power of women with regard to family planning. Economic and social security benefits to be derived from children are the important factors in encouraging the larger number of children in lower income groups, while desire for quality children, occupational role rewards and opportunity costs of upper class women discourage them to seek large families. Hence, the present study attempts to analyse the role of class on decision-making power of women in adoption of family planning.

Methodology

Since the principal concern of the study is to examine the role of class in the utilization of tangible resources by women to gain decision-making power, city of Madras with its wide range of distribution of women in lower, middle and upper classes has been found to be an appropriate field setting.

Currently married women in the reproductive age group of 15-40 years with at least one surviving child have been considered to be the respondents of the study. By employing stratified simple random sampling, 315 respondents were selected and a schedule was used to collect data from them on a wide variety of aspects

Analysis of Data

In order to analyse the influence of class on decision-making power of women in the adoption of family planning, the respondents were categorized into three classes, namely, low, middle and high. The entire sample is statistically divided into three groups based on total family income for a month. Accordingly, families with a total income of Rs. 750 and below were considered as lower class, families whose total income ranges from Rs 750 to Rs 7,600 as middle class and those families with an income above Rs 7,600 were taken to be upper class. Further, within each class, the sample was divided into two groups one including women with their own income either through employment or property and the other group consisting of housewives without income. Thus, in all three classes, there were six groups identified and considered for analysis.

Five instances of family planning considered for the study are timing of the first child, planning of subsequent pregnancies, sterilization, abortion and family size.

The following procedures have been adopted for analysing the influence of resources on decision-making power in the six groups:

1. To study the distribution of resources and decision-making power in the six groups, and mean values of education, occupation, income, social participation and decision-making power in family planning have been

computed and compared. However, the mean values of occupation and income have been computed and compared only for the groups which include women with own income.

2. Analysis of variance has been computed for the groups comprising of women with income. The aim of this analysis is to find out whether the groups differ significantly with respect to decision-making power.
3. In order to examine the direction and extent of relationship between the resources and decision-making power in each of the six groups, simple correlation analysis has been attempted.

Distribution of Resources and Decision-Making Power in Different Classes

To identify the pattern of distribution of resources and decision-making power, intra- and inter-class comparisons of the mean values of resources and decision-making power among the six groups are made, as is shown in Table 1.

Intra-class comparison: Within each class, a comparison is made between the two groups, one including women with income and the other without income. Since one of these groups include women without occupation or income, these two resources have not been taken into account for intra-class comparison. The comparison has been made with respect to education, social participation and decision-making power. Table 1 indicates that within the upper class, the mean values of education, social participation and decision-making power are higher among women with income than among those without income. Similarly, in the middle class also, the mean values of education, social participation and decision-making power are higher for women with income. This makes clear that within each class, women with income have higher levels of other resources as well as decision-making power.

TABLE 1
CLASS, RESOURCES AND DECISION-MAKING POWER

Sl. No	Class (Family income in Rs per months)	Number	Mean Value of Resources				Mean Values of Decision- making Power
			Edn. yrs	Occ. yrs	Inc. Rs/mth	Soc. part. (level)	
1. Upper Class > Rs 7,600							
a)	Women without income	8	13.63	1.00	0.0	3.25	3.42
b)	Women with income	46	17.04	5.78	3806.74	3.80	5.41
2. Middle Class Rs 750 to Rs 7,600							
a)	Women without income	61	9.89	1.00	0.0	2.69	3.29
b)	Women with income	130	12.61	4.62	1762.25	3.08	4.21
3. Lower Class < Rs 750							
a)	Women without income	39	3.69	1.00	0.0	2.03	2.81
b)	Women with income	51	3.13	2.42	176.45	2.90	2.30

Source: Field Survey.

It follows from Table 1 that in the lower working class, it is likely that women with employment and income will have greater decision-making power. As is seen from Table, the mean values of education and decision-making power are slightly higher in the group with no income. It may be attributable to the fact that there is a slightly higher level of education in the group with no income and this is, perhaps, responsible for the higher level of decision-making power. As there is appreciable disparity in the mean values of decision-making power between the groups, it can be surmised that in the lower working class, both working and non-working women have more or less the same level of decision-making power because they have the similar perception of the

rewards of maternal role. Moreover, working women in this class are usually engaged in the traditional sector and hence do not find child bearing and rearing incompatible with their work. Therefore, it can be concluded that in the upper and *middle classes, resources have greater influence on decision-making power than in the lower working class.*

Inter-class Comparisons: The following conclusions emerge from the inter-class comparisons:

1. The mean values of resources and decision-making power are compared among the groups without income, in different classes. Table 1 shows a consistent decrease in the mean values of resources and decision-making power from the upper to the lower classes.
2. Similarly, the mean values of resources and decision-making power are compared among the groups with income, in different classes. The comparison reveals that the levels of resources and decision-making power consistently decrease from the upper class to the lower working class.

Therefore, it is imperative that the resources increase with levels of classes and with it increases the decision-making power of women.

Within classes, comparisons show differences in resources and so differences in decision-making powers, meaning the higher the level of resources, the greater is the decision-making power for women in family planning. This is also reflected in the inter-class comparisons, in that, the resources decline from the upper class to lower class and hence, the decision-making power also declines from the upper to lower classes. In the lower working class, there is no appreciable difference between working and non-working women in respect of decision-making power.

The analysis of variance is computed for the three groups, including women with own income. Table 2 presents the computed variance between groups and variance within groups, besides the F ratio.

**TABLE 2
DECISION-MAKING POWER OF THE THREE GROUPS.**

Sl. No.	Class	Mean of Decision-making Power	Variance Between Groups	Variance Within Groups	F Ratio
1.	Upper	5.41			9.65
2.	Middle	4.21	35.15	3.64	df=2205
3.	Lower	2.30			

Source: Authors' computation.

F ratio is significant at 0.01 level at degrees of freedom 2205.

The group variances, both between and within, show significant variances in the decision-making powers. However, the perception of the maternal role rewards and the perception of the alternative role rewards differ among women belonging to different classes. In most cases, income is derived from employment and, among the upper class women, the occupational role provides alternative satisfaction to children and hence, they favourably perceive the rewards of the alternative role. In the lower classes, though women earn some income from employment and contribute significantly to the family budget, they are helpless to decide on family size. They have no provisions for future security and there is not much scope for development either, nor do they derive any sense of achievement. Moreover, they have to work for their survival. Hence, they expect children to provide these benefits and the preference for sons becomes strong. The nature of their work also permits them to rear children in the work environment. Thus the lower class women perceive the rewards of the maternal role more favourably than the rewards of the alternative role. Hence, they are not able to decide on family size and are rather ambivalent in their decisions regarding adoption of family planning.

Direction and Extent of Relationship

To examine the direction and extent of relationship between the resources and decision-making power, values of

simple correlation are computed and compared. Table 3 presents the simple correlation values of the resources, which are positively associated with decision-making power in all the six groups. But the relationship is not significant in both the groups of the upper class. In the middle class, education is significantly related to decision-making power in both the groups, whereas social participation is significantly related only in the group with no income.

**TABLE 3
CLASS AND RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESOURCES AND
DECISION-MAKING POWER**

Sl. Class No.	Number	Values of Simple Correlation Between Resources and Decision-making Power			
		Edn.	Occ.	Inc.	Soc. part
1. Upper Class					
a) Women without income	8	0.43	-	-	* 0.21
b) Women with income	46	0.01	0.11	0.01	0.05
2. Middle Class					
a) Women without income	61	0.72*	-	-	0.35*t
b) Women with income	130	0.49*	0.12	0.15	0.15
3 Lower Class					
a) Women without income	39	0.53*t	-	-	0.22
b) Women with income	31	0.43**	0.15	0.05	0.05

Source: Authors' Computation.

*Significant at 0.01 level; ** Significant at 0.05 level; Others are insignificant.

Again in the lower class, only education is found to be significantly related to decision-making power in both the groups. Other resources show no significant relationships.

In the upper class, all resources are possessed at higher

levels and they all influence decision-making power, but correlation coefficients are found to be small. In the middle class, for both women with income and women without income, education has a significant relationship with decision-making power. This is because other resources have less influence and show lower levels of significance. With the higher levels of education, and the potentials for higher levels of employment, women are provided with a power base for making decisions and their perception of the rewards of the maternal and alternative roles also influence their decision-making. Their perception of increased cost of children, opportunity cost and time cost enable them to develop crystallized idea on family size.

In the middle class, among women without income, although both education and social participation are the significant factors in relation to decision-making power, education has a higher degree of relationship than social participation. This is understandable, in that social participation increases only with occupation. For women without occupation, education by itself is a significant factor which has positive relationship with decision-making power. But in the group with own income, education alone is found to be significant. Education determines the level of occupation and income, while employment provides greater opportunity for social participation.

In the lower class, in both the groups with and without income, education alone is found to be significantly related to decision-making power. At this level, education provides some awareness of the relationship between limited family size and health of mother and children. With lower levels of resources, women in these two groups do not differ much in their perception of value of child and favour the rewards of the maternal role. Hence, both working and non-working women in this category have the same ambivalent ideas on family size and the same level of decision-making powers.

Conclusion

In sum, class factor in decision-making power with regard to adoption of family planning reveals that, for upper and middle class women, reproduction ceases to be an

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important power basis as they are in a position to derive sufficient status and power from other resources. On the other hand, the women of lower class, in the absence of other resources, have to rely on reproduction to diminish their powerlessness. And, for them, education is found to be the only significant resource which can increase their decision-making power. The inference, that even with employment and income, there is not much difference in their perception and attitude towards maternal roles, reflects the significance of the socio-cultural factor over and above the economic factor. Thus, class assumes importance in the utilization of resources towards gaining decision-making powers for women.

WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS IN THE FAMILY AND SOCIALIZATION

An Empirical Study

E. Suryamani

Family is by far the most important primary group in society, defined by a sex relationship sufficiently precise and enduring to provide for the procreation and upbringing of children. It is the primary unit of society which transmits culture through socialization. The common tradition-bound, male-dominated patriarchal family used to provide education and employment to its members. It crumbled on account of drastic changes in the outer society and also on account of domestic discord and disharmony. The primary functions of the joint family and the emerging modern nuclear family include:

- i) the procreation and the care and nurture of the young;
- ii) the more stable satisfaction of sex needs of the partners: and
- iii) the sharing of home with its combination of material, cultural and affectional satisfaction.

Family is an effective socializing unit of the society. The child from birth depends on the family till she or he attains a position for independent living. The parents and elder relations exercise authority and show affection and thereby enforce obedience and socialize the child in order to inculcate in him or her the beliefs, attitudes, norms and value of the society. The child internalizes and follows them and becomes instrumental for changes in them to suit the circumstances of life in the society. Besides this, each family follows and socializes its members into following them as of a right and custom. These various aspects are known as culture and cultural traits of the family and are followed with

passion. Similarly religious rites and practices are also observed. Family is thus a unit of society which works out as an effective instrument of socialization of its members.

Changes in the family have taken place following industrialization, urbanization, education, democratic values and constitutional and legal provisions. Under the impact of a number of forces like emergence of different types of occupations outside the home, spread of modern means of communication and expansion of adult as well as school education, changes are likely to take place in the religious, economic, social and educational status and role of women in the family, family relations and in the socialization of children. Though Indian women are granted equality of status as well as freedom to enter diverse walks of life, the realization of these constitutional and legal rights and opportunities in actual social life is not yet achieved.

Traditionally the woman is associated with housekeeping and child care in several countries. Even in modern nuclear family the woman is the main person performing these functions. Her attitudes, beliefs, etc, regarding certain aspects of life and society and its functioning are relevant and essential in the socialization of the child. Even though traditional joint family has undergone deep changes, nuclear families have emerged, education and employment have taught the women about the liberal and democratic views of life and there is definite awareness in the women about their status and development, the women are not free from certain views and beliefs and practices of the traditional family and they still continue these in the socialization of their children even though they have outgrown their utility and become dysfunctional. This is detrimental to the full development of children. These aspects become ingrained and implanted in the minds of the young and hamper the awareness of their rights and duties and for making efforts for education, employment and fuller participation in the national effort.

Some studies show that though the household family in urban areas is becoming more and more nuclear, family relations are to a great extent governed by traditional joint family norms and values. Subordination of women to men and segregation of sexes is followed in the family in rural and urban areas and tasks such as domestic chores, child care

and housekeeping continue to be performed even by educated working women. The general view is that it is the womenfolk who play crucial role in the following up to the traditional beliefs and practices, observance of norms and rituals in the family. It is they who emphasize, continue and inculcate in the new generation, patterns of sex segregation and sex subjugation as well as authority of men over women.

Objectives

1. To see whether husband or wife decides the education; occupation and marriage of their children, major purchases, major investments, expenditure on religious ceremonies and festivals.
2. To know whether it is the wife or husband mainly taking part in the socialization of their children.
3. To see whether the housekeeping duties are distributed to husband or wife or both.
4. To know the attitude of women regarding husband-wife relationship in the family.
5. To know the attitudes towards the restraints on mobility of teenage girls.
6. To know the attitude of women regarding marriage of their children.
7. Finally to examine whether the views, beliefs and practices in respect of certain norms, values and practices of their children limit or are detrimental to the full development of their children.

Methodology

Universe: Women working in different branches of State Bank of India in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh constitute the universe of this study.

Sample: In Visakhapatnam situated in Andhra Pradesh there are 29 branches of State Bank of India in which nearly 170 to 200 women are working as clerks as well as officers. The investigator selected 100 women on certain qualifications, that is, the respondents should be in the age range of 25 to 45 years as those who are married and have children.

The investigator considered these characteristics because the study is mainly based on socialization of children in the family, husband-wife relationships, decision-making, division of work, etc.

The study is conducted in two phases. In the first phase the researcher took the list of women working in the different branches of State Bank of India, Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh and noted the names of the women who were married and had children. In the second phase the researcher administered the interview method with the help of a structured schedule consisting of socio-economic background of the respondent, decision-making, division of work in the family, socialization in the family, husband-wife relationships, attitude towards mobility, marriage and family.

Socio-Economic Background

It is generally conceived that the state of the individual is better understood against the backdrop of the socio-economic composition of the sampled respondents. The single largest majority of 52 per cent of the women belong to the age group of 30-34 years. About 82 per cent of the families are nuclear families. If we look at the data on the number of earning members, an overwhelming majority of 96 per cent of the women who have two earning members each including themselves is noticed, whereas only 4 per cent have three earning members.

About 52 per cent of the respondents have two dependents whereas 32 per cent of the women have only one dependent. Nearly, 12 per cent of the women are maintaining three dependents and only 4 per cent of the women have four or more dependents.

Regarding monthly family income, 46 per cent of the respondents are having the monthly family income ranging between Rs 5,000 and Rs 7,000 followed by 24 per cent who have stated that they are getting in the range of Rs 3,000 to Rs 5,000. About 20 per cent of the sampled respondents are drawing a salary ranging between Rs 7,000 and Rs 9,000 and only 10 per cent of the working women claimed that they are getting above Rs. 9,000.

Decision-Making

Regarding decision-making power in the family the largest majority of 61 per cent of the sampled respondents stated that both husband and wife decide the educational career of the children, 16 per cent stated that they left this decision-making about educational career to their children themselves.

When the occupational career of the children is considered, 60 per cent of women expressed that both husband and wife decide the occupational career of the children, 23 per cent gave their view that they left it to their children themselves. Regarding the expenditure in marriage of children, 67 per cent stated that both husband and wife decide the expenditure of the family. The rest of the statements are negligible.

When the researcher asked about the decision-making about the life partner of the children, a change is seen in their attitude reflecting the changing conditions in the society: while 45 per cent of the respondents opined that both husband and wife decide the life partner of children, 35 per cent of the respondents expressed that their children themselves decide about their life partners. The reason for this change may be that the present society is encouraging education of women and their employment. So women also have the chance to get employment according to their qualifications. Even uneducated women are engaged in some employment outside the house, and by cultural contact and diffusion they are also able to decide their family matters and their future.

So women are encouraging their children also to choose their own life partner whether the child is a son or a daughter. In Table 1 the questions five and six pertaining to expenditure on major purchases and major investments and on religious ceremonies or festivals show that 51 and 42 per cent of the respondents respectively stated that both husband and wife decide equally as against 32 per cent of the women who are of the opinion that the husband is the only decision-maker regarding these matters. This shows that the society and culture is changing but the traditional ideas are still persisting.

TABLE 1
DECISION-MAKING

Sl.No.	Decision-making	Husband	Wife	Both	Children	Total
1.	The educational career of children	12 (9.52)	11 (7.5)	61 (14.05)	16 (17.2)	100
2.	The occupational career of children	10 (7.93)	7 (4.76)	60 (13.82)	23 (24.73)	100
3.	The expenditure in the marriage of children	7 (5.5)	12 (8.16)	67 (15.43)	14 (15.05)	100
4.	The life partner of children	13 (10.31)	10 (6.8)	45 (10.36)	32 (34.4)	100
5.	The expenditure on major purchases and major investments	32 (25.4)	15 (10.2)	51 (11.75)	2 (2.2)	100
6.	The expenditure on religious ceremonies/ festivals	32 (25.4)	24 (16.3)	42 (9.67)	2 (2.2)	100
7.	Wife's job	12 (9.52)	31 (21.08)	55 (12.67)	2 (2.2)	100
8.	Type of job	8 (6.34)	37 (25.17)	53 (12.21)	2 (2.2)	100
Total		126 (15.75)	147 (18.37)	434 (54.25)	93 (11.62)	800

Figures in parentheses denote percentages

Regarding the decision of taking up a job and the nature of job 55 and 51 per cent of respondents respectively stated that both husband and wife decide it on mutual consent, 31 per cent and 37 per cent respectively responded that the wife herself decides on her doing a job and the nature of the job. This partly shows the changing attitude of women.

Socialization in the family

In the beginning the individual learns, accepts and internalizes, practises the ideas, behaviour, attitudes, customs, traditions, etc. of the society in the family only. That means family is the main agent of and principal centre for socialization. Previously and at present also it is the woman who mainly socializes the children as she is closely attached to the children. She does most of the housekeeping work and initial child care is obviously one reason for her closeness to children. She is everything in the household, for example, teacher, adviser, sometimes leader and controller of so many

things. Table 2 shows who does the socialization in the family.

**TABLE 2
SOCIALIZATION IN THE FAMILY**

Sl. No. family	Socialization in the	Husband	Wife	Both	Total
1.	Who teaches early education to the children	8 (8.42)	75 (24.91)	17 (8.3)	100
2.	Who teaches the ethical values of society to the children	20 (21.05)	47 (15.61)	33 (16.17)	100
3.	Who makes the children follow the religious ideas and rituals of the family	10 (10.52)	55 (18.27)	35 (17.15)	100
4.	Who makes the children follow and preserve the culture (i.e values, beliefs, attitudes) in the family	9 (9.47)	42 (13.95)	49 (24.01)	100
5.	Who controls the activities of teenage girls in the family	12 (12.63)	57 (18.93)	31 (15.19)	100
6.	Who controls the activities of teenage boys in the family	36 (37.89)	25 (8.30)	39 (19.11)	100
Total:		95 (15.83)	301 (50.16)	204 (34)	600

Figures in parentheses denote percentages

Table 2 reveals that while the largest majority of 75 per cent and 47 per cent of the respondents opined that the wife imparts early education and ethical values of the society respectively to the children, 17 per cent and 33 per cent stated that both are responsible for the early education and instilling of ethical values of society to the children respectively. No doubt, because of the present trend of encouraging home education in society, wife's role has become important in the early education of her children. But in previous times

also the child used to get the early steps of education besides culture through small stories, folktales, customs, traditions, etc, from his or her mother. About 55 per cent of the respondents are of the opinion that the wife makes the children follow the religious ideas and rituals in the family. Nearly 35 per cent of women are of the opinion that both husband and wife together teach the religious ideas and rites in the family. For influencing the children to follow and preserve the culture (that is, the values, beliefs and attitudes) in the family, 49 per cent stated that both wife and husband play their part jointly while 42 per cent stated that the wife does it largely and alone. As to the control over teenage girls in the family 57 per cent of the sampled respondents believe that women control the activities of teenage girls in the family and 39 per cent stated that both husband and wife control the activities of teenaged boys in the family. An overall view of the Table evidently shows that the wife is the principal socializing agent in the family.

Division of work in the family

Previously women were responsible for housekeeping and child-caring jobs. But in the present changed society where status and development of women are accepted and followed, women are also educated and employed, the wife is still doing the housekeeping and child-caring jobs. The Table 3 definitely confirms these ideas.

The reason for this is that during pregnancy and one year after childbirth the wife plays the unavoidable role of childbearing and rearing activities so that she develops much love and affection for the child. She feels happy only when she attends to the needs of her children as she feels that child care is a part of herself.

In a traditional family, wife is responsible for all of the housekeeping duties though there is some change in all division of work, a large part of the housekeeping work is done by either women or maidservants. From Table 3 it is clear that wife does cooking in the family (92 per cent); she serves food (86 per cent); she cleans the house (65 per cent); she washes the clothes (51 per cent); she takes care of small children (41 per cent) and in some families the servant cleans the house (32 per cent); servant washes the clothes (43 per cent). About 49 per cent of the respondents stated that

TABLE 3
DIVISION OF WORK IN THE FAMILY

Sl. No.	Work	Husband	Wife	Both	Servant	Total
1.	Who cooks the food in the family	3 (3.7)	92 (20.81)	5 (2.6)	-	100
2.	Who serves the food in the family	3 (3.7)	86 (19.45)	9 (4.68)	2 (2.29)	100
3.	Who cleans the house	-	65 (14.70)	3 (1.56)	32 (36.78)	100
4.	Who washes the clothes	2 (2.53)	51 (11.53)	4 (2.08)	43 (49.42)	100
5.	Who does daily shopping	49 (62.02)	23 (5.2)	26 (13.54)	2 (2.29)	100
6.	Who takes care of small children	6 (7.59)	41 (9.27)	49 (25.52)	4 (4.50)	100
7.	Who takes care of old parents	6 (7.59)	41 (9.27)	49 (25.52)	4 (4.59)	100
8.	Who takes care of sick persons	10 (12.65)	43 (9.72)	47 (24.47)	-	100
Total:		79 (9.87)	442 (55.25)	192 (24)	87 (10.87)	800

Figures in parentheses denote percentages

husband does the daily shopping. Both husband and wife take care of old (49 per cent) and sick persons (47 per cent) in the family. Analysing on the basis of responses out of 800 responses husband got 9.87 per cent (79 responses), wife got 55.25 per cent (442), both husband and wife together got 24 per cent (192) and servant got 10.87 per cent (87) responses. Out of 79 responses in favour of husband, 62.02 per cent of women stated that husband plays a prominent role in doing daily shopping. Rest of the roles are secondary. Out of 800 responses, the first priority goes to wife (442, that is, 55.25 percent), second priority to both husband and wife (192, that is, 24 per cent), third priority to servant (10.87 per cent) and only last priority to husband (79, that is, 9.87 per cent). This Table clearly emphasizes that most of the work in the family is being done by the wife. Nowadays as she is educated and employed she has been given some extra duties in some families due to her additional knowledge.

Husband-wife relationship

Husband-wife relations are important for preserving the

institutions of family and marriage. In the traditional male dominated society and the present nuclear family, both husband and wife try to keep the harmony in the family. They cannot serve long unless this harmony is kept up through mutual understanding. Table 4 shows that 53 per cent of women asserted that they always give preference to their husband's views and 47 per cent of the respondents stated that sometimes they give preference to their husband's views. This clearly reveals that 100 per cent of the women give preference to their husband's views. Understandably no one gave a negative reply in this context. To another question, 69 per cent of the sampled respondents expressed that they sometimes expect their husbands to help in household work like cooking, serving, cleaning, washing, child care, etc. This is followed by 19 per cent of the respondents saying that they never expect their husbands to do household work at all. Only 12 per cent expect their husbands to always help in household work. For another question 71 per cent of the women emphasized that between them they always agree with their husband regarding expenditure; 19 per cent are of the opinion that sometimes they agree with their husbands regarding expenditure and only 10 per cent never agree with their husbands. Regarding the husband giving respect to wife's feelings, 63 per cent of the respondents stated that the husband always gives respect to the wife's feelings followed by 33 per cent of women who said that the husband sometimes gives respect to the wife's feelings. When the investigators asked as to who yields to whom when there are differences between husband and wife, it is interesting to note that 67 per cent of respondents said that they would always yield to their husbands while 79 per cent said that they expect their husbands to yield sometimes. About 51 per cent of the respondents stated that as a mother they would tell their daughters always to yield to the views of their husbands in case of differences between them for upholding the family harmony. Agreeably, though in negative terms, 43 per cent of the respondents stated that as a mother they would never tell their daughters that husbands would yield to the views of the wives in case of differences between them for upholding the family harmony. This Table clearly shows that normally the wives would never court trouble. As far as possible women want to adjust with their husbands and

bring about happiness in the family because there is no protection and happiness to both husband and wife if they live separately. As a mother a woman does not want to involve herself in her daughter's family matters. If at all she happens to interfere with her daughter's family matters she advises not to oppose the husband's views as such interference may lead to troubles and family breakdown.

TABLE 4
HUSBAND-WIFE RELATIONSHIP

Sl No.	Husband-wife Relationships	Always	Sometimes	Never	Total
1.	Do you give preference to your husband's views	53 (17.84)	47 (12.14)		100
2.	Do you expect your husband to help in household work like cooking, serving cleaning, washing and child care	12 (4.04)	69 (17.82)	19 (16.37)	100
3.	Between you both do you agree regarding expenditure	71 (23.9)	19 (4.9)	10 (8.62)	100
4.	Does your husband give respect to your feelings	63 (21.21)	33 (8.52)	4 (3.44)	100
5.	When there are differences between you and your husband would you yield	23 (7.74)	67 (17.31)	10 (8.62)	100
6.	Would you expect your husband to yield	14 (4.71)	79 (20.41)	7 (6.03)	100
7.	As a mother would you tell your daughter to yield to the views of her husband in case of differences between them for upholding the family harmony	51 (17.17)	26 (6.71)	23 (19.87)	100
8.	As a mother would you tell your daughter that her husband would yield to her views in case of differences between them for upholding the family harmony	10 (3.36)	47 (12.14)	43 (37.06)	100
Total:		297 (37.12)	387 (43.38)	116 (14.5)	800

Figures in parentheses denote percentages.

Attitudes towards the restraints on mobility of teenage girls.

Table 5 reveals the attitude of working women towards the restrictions on teenage girls. About 50 per cent of women stated that only sometimes they feel happy when they gave birth to a second daughter followed by 35 per cent of women who always feel happy at the birth of a second daughter. Regarding higher education 94 per cent of the respondents always allow their daughters to get higher education. Regarding restrictions while 52 per cent and 47 per cent of the women never allow their teenage daughters to go to picnics with boys and to move freely with boys respectively, 43 per cent of the respondents stated that they sometimes allow their teenage daughters to go to picnics with boys and to move freely with boys. In comparison with boys in thinking, talking and overt act, 38 per cent stated that they never instruct their daughters to be restrained in life. On the whole out of 500 responses 30.6 per cent always put restrictions on their daughters, 39 per cent sometimes put restrictions, whereas another 39.4 per cent never put restrictions on their daughters. This Table emphasizes that they do not like their daughters to move freely with boys and to go to picnics with boys. The reason is that is obvious fears that any slur of misbehaviour of the girls would spoil their future and married life.

TABLE 5
ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE RESTRAINTS ON
MOBILITY OF TEENAGE GIRLS

Sl. Restraints No.	Always	Sometimes	Never	Total
1. Do you feel happy when you give birth to a second girl child	35 (22.87)	50 (25.64)	15 (9.86)	100
2. Do you allow your daughter to get higher education	94 (61.43)	6 (3.07)		100
3. Do you allow unhesitatingly your teenage daughter to go for picnics with boys	5 (3.26)	43 (22.05)	52 (34.21)	100

(Continued on next page)

Table 5 Contd..

Sl. No.	Restraints	Always	Sometimes	Never	Total
4.	Do you allow un-hesitatingly your teenage daughter to move freely with boys	10 (6.53)	43 (22.05)	47 (30.92)	100
5.	Do you ever instruct your daughter to be restrained in life when compared to boys in thinking, etc.	9 (5.88)	53 (27.17)	38 (25.00)	100
	Total:	153 (30.6)	195 (39.00)	152 (30.4)	500

Figures in parentheses denote percentages

Activities Towards Marriage

Table 6 shows the attitudes of working women towards marriage. About 51 per cent of the respondents stated that they leave this aspect to their daughters only. So they do not bother about dowry. But 34 per cent of the women expressed that they do not give dowry to their daughters and only 15 per cent agree to give dowry to their daughters. As against this 62 per cent of working women do not take dowry for their sons; 34 per cent leave this idea to their sons. Regarding age at marriage 85 per cent of the sampled women agree to get their daughters married only after attaining majority. One interesting point is that while 52 per cent of the women allow their daughters to marry other caste boys, 62 per cent of the respondents do not allow their daughters to marry boys belonging to another religion. That means they do not have any objection to inter-caste marriage as the religion is same, but they object the inter-religious marriage. The reason is that their daughters would not be able to adjust to the problems of cultural differences of their mates or there may arise conflicts between them on account of cultural differences. No mother can cope with the thought that her daughter's married life would be in trouble. That is why 50 per cent of the women do not prefer love marriage for their daughters and 57 per cent of the respondents prefer arranged marriage for their daughters. About 35 per cent and 24 per cent of the women leave the choice to their children regarding love marriage or arranged marriage. Nearly 84 per

cent of the working women encourage widow remarriages and 70 per cent and 61 per cent do not prefer child marriages and do not follow the restrictions on widows like wearing *bindi*, *kajal*, flowers, bangles, etc.

TABLE 6
ATTITUDES TOWARDS MARRIAGE

Sl No.	Attitude Towards Marriage	Yes	No	Children's Opinion	Total
1.	Do you give dowry for your daughter	15 (4.21)	34 (8.35)	51 (21.51)	100
2.	Do you take dowry for your son	4 (1.12)	62 (15.23)	34 (14.34)	100
3.	Do you want to get your daughter married only after attaining majority	85 (23.87)	15 (3.68)		100
4.	Do you allow your daughter to marry a boy belonging to some other caste.	52 (14.60)	25 (6.14)	23 (9.70)	100
5.	Do you allow your daughter to marry a boy belonging to another religion	22 (6.18)	62 (15.23)	16 (6.75)	100
6.	Do you prefer love marriage for your daughter	15 (4.21)	50 (12.28)	35 (14.76)	100
7.	Do you prefer arranged marriage for your daughter	57 (16.01)	19 (4.66)	24 (10.12)	100
8.	Do you encourage widow remarriage	84 (23.59)	9 (2.21)	7 (2.95)	100
9.	Do you prefer child marriage	8 (2.24)	70 (17.19)	22 (9.28)	100
10.	Do you follow the restrictions on widows like putting <i>bindi</i> , <i>kajal</i> , flowers, bangles, etc.	14 (3.93)	61 (14.93)	25 (10.54)	100
Total:		356 (35.6)	407 (40.7)	237 (23.7)	1000

Figures in parentheses denote percentages.

Table 6 clearly emphasizes that old ideas, ideals, habits and customs and traditions have changed in the aspects of

dowry, inter-caste marriages, widow remarriages, child marriages and restrictions on widows in changing society. Though customs, traditions, ideals continue to prevail in society, their grip on society is relaxing yielding place to new thoughts, giving greater freedom to women to become equal partners in life and responsible members of society.

Conclusion

It is revealed by this study, that in some aspects the women are still holding certain customary beliefs, values, etc, and are socializing their children with them. Awareness has to be created in them for the full development of their children by giving socialization as a sister, as a mother and aunt and grandmother. The causes for their holding these customary beliefs etc, must be learnt and removed. Women must see that outmoded and outdated customs, beliefs, etc, are not followed and their children should achieve confidence in life and render their service in the furtherance of the national efforts, while preserving the really valuable and worthwhile values, etc, of life, even though they are traditional and form the culture of the family and society which give them identity and distinction in the long history of human race.

AMNIOCENTESIS

Legal Implications

D.V.N. Reddy

Law is an instrument of social change. It must keep pace with a progressive modern society. Living in the late twentieth century is a more complicated process than what it was in the times of our forefathers. The problems of today cannot be solved by the methods or tools known to them. These will have to be tested from time to time to suit the changing social circumstances. Social change in society can be brought about either through welfare measures which must be provided in abundance or through persuasion by creating a strong public opinion and awareness against age-old prejudices, or lastly by legislation.

Many legislative measures of social reform could not root out the evils in society, for example, abolition of untouchability, dowry prohibition and child marriage. This is so because, even though the government of the day may pass a law, its implementation requires the support of the judiciary, the police and a strong public opinion. In fact, a strong public opinion may not only prepare a ground for a piece of legislation but also compel the government to enact it. But in our country enlightened public opinion means the opinion of the elite which constitutes a microscopic segment of the Indian society.

Advances in medical science and technology have thrown up a whole gamut of social, legal and moral issues which have far-reaching consequences on society. Primarily, medicine and law are the two disciplines concerned; but some of the problems could be of interest to scholars of sociology and ethics as well as anthropology. Men and women of various learned professions would then get the opportunity of explaining their own role and of communicating to society the state of professional knowledge on several matters touching medicine and law. This will have the effect of facilitating a

better social awareness of matters which are apparently technical, but which have a wider impact. It will also further an intelligent social evaluation of important ethical and philosophical questions which arise in the course of medical practice.

The ultimate object is to promote a better understanding of the issues and to facilitate a meaningful dialogue between the learned professions that are concerned with the subject. The prenatal Diagnostic Techniques is one such area relating to many disciplines.

On 10 May 1988, the Government of Maharashtra brought into force the Maharashtra Regulation of use of prenatal Diagnostic Techniques Act, . This moment which ought to have been one of jubilation turned out to be a moment of doubt and misgivings. Amniocentesis is a medical technology which was developed a few decades ago to detect genetic abnormalities in the foetus. In India, the tests were widely used for sex determination with the specific intention of aborting the female foetus. The abortions which had to be carried out in the second trimester of pregnancy were extremely dangerous to a woman's health. The issue had hit the headlines when a male foetus was erroneously aborted.

A ban on the misuse of the technology in government institutions had led to its privatization and commercialization. Sex determination clinics mushroomed all over the country.¹

There were angry protests and agitations by women's organizations and activists. Surveys were conducted which revealed that sex determination tests have become a lucrative business in several parts of the country.

The instant popularity of sex determination tests indicated the societal abhorrence towards female foetus. Progress and development have apparently not contributed towards changing the basic attitude. With the aid of science and technology it had acquired sophisticated forms and precipi-

tated the killings from the born to the unborn stage. The tests also raised the issue of neutrality of science and technology and the indifference of the medical community to issues of social justice.

A determined campaign against the misuse of amniocentesis and other such tests was launched by a group of activists in Bombay, known as the Forum Against Sex Determination and Sex Pre-selection (FASDSP). This group collected a lot of information on the use of this test and the consequent abortion on discovering that it is a female foetus.² In view of the strong agitations and protests, the Government of Maharashtra set up an expert committee before the Bill could come up for discussion.

The report of the committee, submitted in May 1987, gave the campaign a boost as it had included all its demands in its recommendations. The main recommendations were as follows:

- i) The misuse of prenatal diagnostic techniques for sex determination should be totally banned;
- ii) Its use should be restricted only to government institutions;
- iii) These techniques should be used for the detection of congenital abnormalities only;
- iv) The State Government should enact a special law for this purpose;
- v) The State Government should pressurize the Central Government to enact a similar legislation at the national level;
- vi) The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act if required, may be amended so as to include in it a clause explicitly stating sex selective abortion as an offence; and
- vii) The law can succeed only if it is supported by a well-planned long-term movement for health education and for raising consciousness. The government should take suitable steps to that effect.

Maharashtra Regulation of use of Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques Act

There was opposition to such a law from some quarters.

1. For those people who had a flourishing business, a ban on the tests would mean loss of business.
2. It was also argued that the government policy of family planning would be adversely affected. A couple wishing to have a son would end up with many girls and with more females there would be growth in population.
3. The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, legalizes abortion and the same is being resorted to as a family planning measure. Since abortion is legal, female foeticide is legal too, according to those who opposed the Bill.
4. The legal ban would only give a boost to private clinics who would raise their charges for the service. The result will be that the poor will suffer.

It was also argued that it was a woman's right to choose her offspring and so a ban on the test would be a violation of her fundamental right.

Despite all opposition, however, there was a tremendous pressure on the Government of Maharashtra to pass the law. Consequently, the Maharashtra Regulation of Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques Act was passed. Though the law has been passed it has not helped in solving the problem. This is because of the government's lack of determination and political will. The anti-law lobby also succeeded in getting its provisions diluted. For example, the initial proposal was that private clinics and laboratories should not be given licenses for any prenatal tests as it would be difficult to exercise control over them. But this was opposed and under the Act now, even private clinics and laboratories can get a license. Besides, the very nature of the test is such that control is not easy. The test is simple and does not require sophisticated equipment etc.

The net result was that the tests continued and many new clinics were established and female foetuses aborted. The need for a central legislation with stringent provisions was strongly felt. There was also pressure on the union government from the anti-law lobby. Because of the pressure

the union government set up an expert committee to look into the matter and submit a report. After a lot of deliberations, the committee submitted its report and the present Bill, the prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Bill, is an outcome of the report.

Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Bill

In April the government of India announced the formation of an expert committee to draft a central legislation. After a prolonged discussion from active members a draft legislation was finalized and circulated to all the state governments. As the very title shows the Bill has two aspects, namely, regulatory and preventive. It seeks to regulate the use of pre-natal diagnostic techniques for medical purpose and prevent misuse for illegal purposes.

Under the Bill, registration is mandatory for every genetic clinic. Without registration, it cannot conduct nor even associate in any activities relating to pre-natal diagnostic techniques. Also no person can be employed in these centres unless he possesses the prescribed qualification. It is also prescribed that no prenatal diagnostic tests should be performed at any place other than a place registered under the Act.

A very important and significant provision of the Bill is that these techniques can be conducted only for a specified purpose, namely, detection of certain abnormalities in the foetus.

These are:

- i) Chromosomal abnormalities;
- ii) Genetic metabolic diseases;
- iii) Haemoglobinopathies;
- iv) Sex linked genetic diseases;
- v) Congenital abnormalities; and
- vi) Any other abnormalities or diseases as may be specified by the central supervisory Board.

The conditions to be fulfilled before the test can be conducted to detect the above mentioned abnormalities are:

1. The age of the woman is 35 years.
2. The pregnant woman has undergone two or more spontaneous abortions or foetal loss.
3. The woman had been exposed to harmful drugs or hazardous substances.
4. There is a history of mental retardation or physical deformity such as spasticity or any other genetic disease in the family of the pregnant woman. Apart from these, the central supervisory Board may specify any other condition also.

It is essential that the woman who seeks the test should be informed of the after and side effects of the procedure and also that her written consent should be obtained. The Bill seeks to prevent the practice of female foeticide by putting a total ban on sex determination tests including ultra sound or sonography. Even advertisement in any form of facilities for prenatal determination of sex is prohibited.

In order to look into various policy and implementation matters the Bill provides for the setting up of various bodies along with their composition, powers and functions. These are the Central Supervisory Board, Appropriate Authorities and Advisory committees.

Penal provisions

The various provisions of the Bill are sought to be enforced by providing punishment for contravention of its provisions. The punishment varies from imprisonment of three to four years and a fine of Rs 10,000 to Rs 50,000. The Medical Council can also take action against a registered medical practitioner on receiving a report from the appropriate authority. For the first offence his name can be removed from the register for two years. If the offence is repeated, his name may be permanently struck down.

It is important to note that even a woman who undergoes the test for finding out the sex of the child, is liable to be punished. There is, however, a presumption that she had gone for the test under pressure or compulsion by her husband or relations. This presumption is rebuttable. In this context, a mention may be made of a provision in Maharashtra Act. Under the Act "the court shall always presume, unless

otherwise proved, that a woman who seeks such aid of prenatal diagnostic procedures on herself has been compelled to do so by her husband or members of his family....and in that case the woman shall be liable to pay a fine of Rupees fifty for each such offence." This clause seems to be anomalous. Why should a woman, who is innocent be made liable for any punishment? If she is guilty of the offence, she should be given the proper punishment as provided, namely, rigorous imprisonment for a term which may be extended to three years and a fine which may extend to Rs 3,000. The minimum punishment in such a case is imprisonment for one year and a fine of Rs 1,000. However, in case she is not guilty because she has been forced into the act by her husband and relatives then there is no justification in penalizing her at all howsoever small the fine may be. Offences under the Bill are cognizable, non-bailable and non-compoundable.

Before the Bill could be presented to the Parliament, the government collapsed and now one has to wait until the new government thinks it important enough to introduce in Parliament or alternatively if sufficient public pressure is generated and the government is forced to introduce it.

Conclusion

The Bill is a welcome step which seeks to put an end to an atrocious practice of foeticide consequent to a sex determination test. This practice, as is well known has arisen out of the social conditions in our country under which a woman has a comparatively very low status. So much so that parents are reluctant even to give birth to a female child. Often, a woman who given birth to daughters only is faced with a risk of being divorced or tortured. In this situation she has a difficult choice to make — either she puts her own life in peril or she puts an end to a female child whom she is about to give birth to. Where such are the conditions, one wonders how far a *de jure* ban on such tests would really be effective. There are more chances of the practice being pushed underground and raising the price of the test. There has to be a very strong political will and honesty in the enforcement of such a law. The institutions which are given licences for prenatal diagnostic tests should be closely monitored and those who violate the law, be stringently dealt with. Needless to say that

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more than anything else, what is needed is a change in the attitude of the society towards the female awareness and education. This along with legislation can go a long way in curbing the evil.

WOMEN AND HEALTH DELIVERY

D.Vasudeva Rao

Introduction

In a developing country like India, poverty is omnipresent with varying degrees. Through migration, poverty is transferred from rural areas to urban areas. In the new environs, the degree and dimensions are intensified. Its ramifications are manifold for different sections of the society. More often than not, women accompanied by their children are the worst affected and the first victims in all walks of life, like health, education, employment, etc.

However, the government is making all out efforts to mitigate the suffering of the poor, in many spheres by adopting new economic and social policies from time to time. The latest economic policy has differential impact on various sections of the society, in different ways, resulting in varying degrees of relief. However, at micro level, some of these policies may have an indirect solution to safeguard and promote the advancement of women either in skill improvement or income and employment generation activities or health improvement or literacy improvement campaigns or by protection through Child Marriage Restraint Act. The links between women development (in the spheres of socio-economic and cultural aspects) and the overall economy have been proved time and again through various studies, in the past, from different parts of the country. However, it is still observed in the field, with empirical evidence, that a lot more needs to be done to bring the status of the woman on par with that of the man in health, education and employment. The budgetary provision is not always encouraging for the 'women and child welfare' and the programmes grounded are not reaching the targetted groups due to many reasons, the most important one being lack of bargaining capacity by the vulnerable group (women and children).

Health Care

The most important angle or aspect of human resources development is the improvement of health, which is the basic foundation for better citizens of tomorrow. Unless proper antenatal care is provided to pregnant women, a nation cannot have low infant and maternal mortality rate. The postnatal care consists of care of the lactating mother as well as protecting the infant from fatal diseases. Then comes the care of the preschool child and his proper growth through continuous and prolonged schooling. But in practice in our country most of the boys are pushed into child labour, while the girls are married at a very young age and thrust into the drudgery of life. All these evils can be prevented only if the women are properly and timely educated of the consequent ill-effects. Their status and value in the house as well as in the society should be enhanced. They should be given an equal role in decision-making on some of the vital issues like family size, sex of the child, level to which the children are to be educated, the age at which the child is to be married, etc.

Women Empowerment

A number of studies have shown that education provides women with the ability to make decisions regarding fertility, the number and spacing of children. Girls' schooling helps keep them in schools for a number of years, which in turn lowers the population growth rate by increasing the age of marriage. Education also has a strong influence on maternal roles. Educated mothers make important decisions regarding their children's health and welfare, nutrition and schooling. They have an impact on children's psychological and educational development. Studies also show that mothers' education has an impact on decreasing the mortality rates of the children. In short, education empowers women in controlling their body and making decisions regarding their children's welfare.

It has been demonstrated that if women are illiterate, they do not make use of existing resources, because they often lack the decision-making power. For example, in some countries women do not practise family planning techniques, despite their easy access to such resources. Therefore, it is

important not only to increase access to health care facilities, but also a sound basic level of education of women and children. The importance of women's education, therefore, cannot be over emphasized.

The Study

The World Bank is interested in financing programmes for improving the number and quality of the health delivery services in four selected cities of our country through a programme called IPP-VIII. The WHO has sponsored some basic studies to ascertain the present situation in these four cities with regard to the health care delivery system for women and children in the urban areas, with focus on slum population.

Study Area

Hyderabad being the one of the four selected cities under IPP-VIII, Council for Social Development has conducted the Baseline Survey and Beneficiary Needs Assessment Study in 10 per cent of the total recognized slums of the city covering 2,500 married women between the ages of 15-45. The data is collected through observation and a structured questionnaire with number of open-ended questions.

Hyderabad city had a population of 21.87 lakhs and it has increased to 30.91 lakhs with a growth rate of 37.35 per cent. There are 662 recognized slums in Hyderabad city with an estimated population of 7.58 lakhs constituting 24.5 per cent of the population.

The existing Urban Family Welfare Centres are situated amidst slums as well as non-slum areas overlapping the population of both the slum as well as non-slum areas. It is difficult to demarcate the area of the existing centres and to restrict their activities only to slum areas. The present additional centres proposed are mainly located in large slum areas to cater to the needs of slum population by involving the community participation in the slum areas.

There are private medical practitioners, providing curative services to the slum population. These private service providers are not at present concentrating on the preventive aspects of the services because they are not more profitable

and remunerative to them. The economically poor communities living in the slum areas use these private service providers since they are not able to reach the larger hospitals in the public sector and even if they reach they are shying away from the bigger hospitals, because they are alien to the practices existing in the bigger hospitals and with the apprehension that they are not cared for properly in these hospitals. With the result the private practitioners are able to thrive and exist in the slum areas.

In the present article, it is proposed to encourage these private medical practitioners showing interest in preventive and preventive aspects of the health care delivery systems. If they are coming forward they will be asked to look after some of the health centres under voluntary sector.

Results of the Two Studies

Some results of the Baseline Survey and Beneficiary Needs Assessment Study are presented and discussed hereunder. These results have a direct bearing on the role and importance of women in getting the health care, provided by the Government agencies. The gaps are identified and discussed.

Though a lot has been said about women employment and providing economic independence to women the data in Table 1 revealed that 84 per cent of the women are housewives and a small percentage (14) are only engaged in economically gainful activities. Data has also revealed that most of the women have not received any skill improvement or entrepreneurial development. Thus there is a lot of motivation needed to encourage women to enter into the economic activity for their own self-development as well as for increasing the household income.

Though legislation was made to ban child marriages it is observed that 42.3 per cent of the respondent mothers are married below the age of 15 and another 50 per cent got married around the age of 18 which is legally permitted (Table 2). This indicates the first evil which is still rampant in the slums, which is the root cause for high maternal mortality rate (M.M.R.) and infant mortality rate (I.M.R.). This evil can be eradicated only by persuasion and convincing the elders about the ill-effects and consequences.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS ACCORDING TO
USUAL ACTIVITY STATUS OF THE WOMEN RESPONDENT

Sl. No.	Activity Status	Per cent
1.	Housewife	84.0
2.	Worker	14.0
3.	Pensioner	00.2
4.	Others	01.8
	Total:	100.0

TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS ACCORDING TO
AGE AT MARRIAGE

Sl. No.	Age at Marriage (years)	Per cent
1.	Below 15	42.3
2.	15-20	50.9
3.	21-25	06.4
4.	Above 26	00.4
	Total	100 0

It is obvious that prolonged married life leads to more number of pregnancies. The data has also revealed that there are mothers who had pregnancies over and above eight (may be in some religious groups). The average number of pregnancies for a mother is observed to be around four (Table 3). Due to high infant mortality rate and lack of future social security measures most of the families have preferred large family size.

It is observed that with prolonged stay in the schools, the age at marriage is considerably delayed. Thus the early child marriage can, not only be avoided by keeping girl in school but also it helps the girl child to get sufficient knowledge about the evils of large family and the related matters (Table 4).

TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS AS PER NUMBER
OF PREGNANCIES

Sl. No	Number of Pregnancies	Percentage
1.	1	13.3
2.	2	21.3
3.	3	24.2
4.	4	17.3
5.	5	08.9
6.	6	06.4
7.	7	03.4
8.	More than 8	05.2
Total:		100.0

TABLE 4
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS ACCORDING TO
LITERACY LEVEL OF MOTHER WITH AGE AT MARRIAGE

Sl. No.	Literacy Level of Mother	Age at Marriage				Total
		-15	15-20	21-25	+26*	
1.	Illiterate	47* (67)	47 (55)	05 (48)	01 (60)	1,550
2.	Can read/ write	39* (04)	52 (05)	09 (06)	-	114
3.	Primary 1-5 class	41* (11)	55 (13)	04 (08)	-	301
4.	Middle 6-8 class	38* (11)	56 (11)	06 (11)	-	309
5.	Secondary 9-10 class	25* (05)	63 (13)	10 (14)	02 (40)	220
6.	ITI/Poly- technic	17* (01)	62 (03)	21 (11)	-	77
7.	Others	67* (01)	-	23 (04)	-	3
Total:		1,091	1,312	160	11	2,574

NOTE: * values denote row percentages. Figures in parentheses denote column percentages.

Regarding the status of the women and their role in decision-making about the family size, the data in Table 5 (a) reveals that literate mothers appear to be very conscious about family size. It is observed that a literate mother makes frequent attempts to discuss with her spouse about limiting the family size [Table 5 (b)]. The ultimate result (as observed in the present survey) may not be satisfactory but yet the awareness and the sincerity in the attempts are to be noted.

TABLE 5 (a)
DISCUSSION WITH SPOUSE ON FAMILY SIZE AND
LITERACY LEVEL OF MOTHER

Answer	Illiterates	Literates	Total
Yes	57.0*	43 0	1.231
	(15 5)	(51 3)	
No	62.6*	37 4	1.343
	(54 5)	(48 7)	
Total:	1,535	1 039	2,574

NOTE: *values indicate row percentages Figures in parentheses denote column percentages.

TABLE 5 (b)
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS ACCORDING TO
REACTION ON FAMILY PLANNING

Sl No	Statement	Awareness of F P Methods		
		Yes	No	Total
1	Before the birth of the first child	57 0*	43 0	107
		(4 6)	(3 7)	
2	After the birth of the first child	62 7*	37 3	300
		(14 1)	(9 0)	
3	After the birth of the second child	51 9*	18 1	141
		(17 2)	(17 1)	
4.	After the birth of the third child	58 7*	41 3	383
		(16 9)	(12 7)	
5.	Never discussed	47 2*	52 8	1215
		(43 1)	(51 6)	
6	Did not answer	41 2*	58 8	128
		(4 2)	(5 9)	
	Total	1332	1242	2574

NOTE: *values indicate row percentages Figures in parentheses denote column percentages.

There is a difference between working women and non-working women as well as literate and illiterate women on the knowledge and practice of immunization [Table 6 (a and b)]. The breast-feeding practices and weaning practices also differed significantly between the two groups. Thus it is needless to say that educating women on important matters like immunization, girl's education, breast-feeding, etc. will go a long way in improving the overall health status of the family.

TABLE 6 (a)

**DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS ACCORDING TO
KNOWLEDGE ABOUT IMMUNIZATION WITH LITERATE,
ILLITERATE MOTHER**

Knowledge about Immunization	Illiterates	Literates	Total
Yes	58.0* (86.0)	42.0 (92.9)	2,285
No	74.7* (14.0)	25.3 (07.1)	289
Total:	1,535	1,039	2,574

NOTE: *Values indicate row percentages. Figures in parentheses denote column percentages.

TABLE 6 (b)

**DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS PERTAINING TO
THE QUESTION WHY THE CHILD WAS NOT IMMUNIZED
WITH LITERATE/ILLITERATE MOTHERS**

Sl.No.	Answer	Illiterates	Literates	Total
1.	Felt not necessary	56.4* (11.7)	43.6 (13.6)	321
2.	Afraid of side-effects	72.9* (6.2)	27.1 (3.4)	131
3.	Do not know where to take	74.7* (4.2)	25.3 (2.1)	87
4.	Did not answer	64.0* (4.1)	36.0 (3.4)	98
5.	No knowledge	59.2* (21.3)	40.8 (21.9)	555
6.	Not applicable	58.6* (52.5)	41.4 (55.5)	1,382
	Total:	1,535	1,039	2,574

NOTE: *values indicate row percentages. Figures in parentheses denote column percentages.

Though 34 family welfare centres are functioning in the city, in addition to 10 child welfare centres and 4 central hospitals, most of these mothers contacted in the survey pleaded ignorance about the existence and services offered by the family welfare centres. For antenatal care, delivery, immunization, infant care, the medical practitioners appear to have a larger role than the government institutions. Though they charge for the services their availability round the clock, or at the hours convenient to the mothers staying away from the vicinity, gives them an edge over the governmental institutions which work between 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Others came out with different reasons for their not utilizing the services (Table 7). This is an indication that the providers of these services have to be well equipped with the latest training for effective communication and Information, Education, Communication, (I.E.C.) planning.

**TABLE 7
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS ACCORDING TO
NON-UTILIZATION OF UFWC**

Sl.No.	Reason	Percentage
1.	Don't know	56
2.	Too far	08
3.	Working hours not suitable	02
4.	Too long waiting	02
5.	No proper attention	08
6.	Behaviour of staff not good	01
7.	No medicines available	01
8.	No answer	10
9.	Others	12
Total:		100

Conclusion

The new economic policy, including 'Health for all by 2000' has many programmes aimed at improving the health status of urban poor with particular focus on women and children. Some of the international organizations and multinations are also willing to foot the bill. But the existing systems/personnel appear to be ineffective to deliver the

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goods. Unless they turn the projects into 'peoples programmes' where the stake holders have to bear the torch, the sponsored programmes will not succeed in any sphere of life — more particularly in the health aspect. Hence, the government should motivate the womens' forums to identify leaders, and train them to become messiahs for spearheading the programmes and make them success stories for others to emulate.

WOMEN IN ENGINEERING EDUCATION

**Susan Verghese
and
Savita R. Pagnis**

Education in post-Independence India is characterized by massive expansion. However, despite rapid expansion of educational opportunities, women have lagged behind men in educational attainment. A faculty-wise analysis of the enrolment in higher education reveals the extent of gender gap and shows that the enrolment of women in Engineering and Technology is one of the lowest (Table 1)

**TABLE I
ENROLMENT OF WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION
A Faculty-wise Analysis**

Faculty	Years	Percentage of women to Total Enrolment	Percentage of Total Women Enrolled
Arts	1950-51	16.1	67.9
		38.2	55.7
Science	1950-51	7.1	21.0
		28.6	20.2
Commerce	1950-51	0.6	0.4
		16.7	12.8
Education	1950-51	32.4	3.1
		48.3	4.2
Engg. / Tech.	1950-51	0.2	0.4
		4.5	0.7
Medicine	1950-51	6.3	5.8
		26.2	3.6

(Continued on next page)

Table 1 Contd.

Faculty	Years	Percentage of women to Total Enrolment	Percentage of Total Women Enrolled
Law			
	1950-51	6.3	5.8
		26.2	3.6
Agriculture			
V.Sc. & Others			
	1950-51	5.8	1.1
		18.3	1.07
All Faculties			
	1950-51	10.9	100.0
		27.7	100.0

The under-representation of women in engineering has caused considerable concern in recent years. The concern is motivated not merely by a commitment to equalization of opportunities but also by the increasing awareness that the underutilization of women's economic potential can be detrimental for a modernizing economy.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women has summarized in its World Survey on the "Role of Women" (1989), a resolution zeroing in on "equality" and has specified its two main components: "equality of opportunity" and "equality of treatment". It has urged governments and non-governmental bodies and women's organizations to accelerate their efforts towards increasing the participation of women in the economy and society. Today countries are no longer ranked just by their per capita incomes but also on the basis of the advancement of their women.

The New Economic Policy of India is bound to have

considerable impact on the employment scene in the country including women's employment. The economic and educational policies spell new challenges and opportunities for women. The question is, to what extent are Indian women willing to meet the challenges and grab the opportunities? In this context, the implication of the low enrolment rate of women in engineering education is that apart from missing out on a rewarding field of study, women are excluding themselves from fields of employment that are likely to be crucial in a liberalizing economy. It has thus become clear that neither the nation can afford to underutilize one half of its population nor can women afford to be underutilized. This realization is reflected in the National Policy of Education (1986) and the Revised Education Policy (1992). "The National Education System will play a positive interventionist role in the empowerment of women..... . The policy of non-discrimination will be pursued vigorously to eliminate sex-stereotyping in vocational and professional courses and to promote women's participation in non-traditional occupations and emergent technologies."

In the present study an effort is made to examine the factors responsible for the low rate of enrolment of women in engineering education. Kremer (1984) points out that studies of gender differences in cognitive abilities do not fully explain the low participation of women in male-dominated fields of study and stresses the importance of social, psychological and even cultural factors in influencing educational and career choices.

Engineering has been culturally defined as an inappropriate profession for women. Such cultural injunctions get reflected in the parental attitude to their daughter's education and career. Most parents who would otherwise encourage their daughter's education would not encourage her engineering education. Besides, parents assign priority to son's education over daughter's. If due to financial constraints a choice is to be made between the education of a son and that of a daughter, it is always the daughter's education that is sacrificed. Given this parental attitude towards engineering education of daughters, it is not surprising that parents are not willing to pay capitation fee or send girls to private engineering colleges which charge high fees. Another

Mason and Bumpass and Spitzé have highlighted the influence of family background factors such as mother's education and maternal employment on sex-role beliefs and career plans. Alwin and Thornton have studied the influence of family socio-economic factors like parental education, parental occupation, family economic level and family size on cognitive development.

Indira's study finds that right from the stage of motivation for engineering education to entry into an engineering college, socio-economic and educational background of the family operate as important determinants. Her study highlights the economic, educational, caste and urban background of the family as facilitating factors.

As it is seen, the influence of the family background on sex-role attitudes is well documented. This raises the question: are sex-role attitudes immutable? Is there no liberalizing influence on the traditional sex-role attitudes? While Thornton et al. mention educational attainment in general, Spitzé points to college education in particular. Mason et al. also mention the rise of women's movement as a possible liberalizing influence.

As family and school are identified as the major agents of gender-role socialization, the present study examines the influence of the family of origin and early schooling on the sex-role attitudes of women students. The objective was to find out the extent to which these sex-role attitudes of the respondents influence their subjective orientation to work. Further, influence of certain personality variables and the varying influence of the three different faculties of higher education, particularly in terms of their liberalizing influence on sex-role attitudes was also investigated.

Data and Procedure

The data used in this study are collected through the administration of a questionnaire eliciting information on the effects of early socialization on the sex-role attitudes of a random sample of 126 students from the Andhra University. The sample is made up of 32 female students from arts faculty, 28 female students from science faculty and 31 female students and 35 male students from engineering

faculty. All respondents were final year students in each faculty. As the focus of the study is on female students and engineering female students in particular, the sub-sample of male engineering students is included only for comparative purposes. The mean age of engineering male sample, engineering female sample, science female sample and arts female sample were 22, 21, 22 and 24 respectively.

Measures of Family Background

To measure the influence of family socialization certain family background variables consisting of socio-economic position of the family (father's education, father's occupation, mother's education, maternal employment, family income and family size) and rural/urban background were considered. Since the content of socialization is influenced by the environment of the home and the role-models provided by parents, home environment and availability of role-model were included as variables. The home environment was measured in terms of autocratic/democratic environment on the basis of responses to questions such as who made major decisions at home, whether respondent's opinions were given credence by parents and whether parents took respondents into confidence

The availability of role-model was ascertained by asking the female respondents if they had a close female relative who was working and if in the respondent's perception this working woman was successfully playing her dual roles.

Religion was not a variable as more than 90 per cent of the sample had the same religious background. Neither was caste taken as a variable because the respondents preferred to indicate their caste background not in specific terms but only as forward castes (FC), backward castes (BC), etc. and this would not facilitate sharp analysis.

Measures of School Background

School background variables considered were type of management of the school State government/ municipal/ Zila Parishad school or private/mission school or central schools) so that an estimate of the quality of education the

respondent has had could be arrived at, medium of instruction (regional language or English) and whether coeducational or not.

Measures of personality characteristics: The influence of certain personality variables like occupational aspiration, dependence, passivism and religiosity on sex-role attitudes were also considered.

The data on occupational aspiration were based on the stated future plans of the respondents. The level of dependence/independence was measured on the basis of the response to such items, such as, children should be given opportunity to express their opinion, in all matters children should consult parents, children should obey parents unconditionally and parents should encourage just as much independence in their daughters as in sons.

The level of passivism was measured through responses to items like "success in life depends on luck rather than hard work"; "seniority rather than merit should be considered for promotions" and to the question: "would you seek employment even if there is no financial necessity to work" and "would you prefer a job with many or few responsibilities."

Religiosity was measured in terms of respondent's own rating of his/her religiosity.

Sex-role Attitudes: Definition and Measurement

Sex-role attitudes represent an individual's judgement of appropriate roles for men and women in general. A woman's sex-role attitudes concerning appropriate adult roles for her, crystallize by late adolescence. Her subjective orientation towards work arises in part from the educational and occupational goals and values developed during her formative years. Exposure to role models who have successfully integrated work and family responsibilities and access to education that enhance employment opportunities can predispose a young woman to subjectively invest in the work role as an adult.

Sex-role attitudes in this study were measured by ten items which related to married working women and were adopted from the Sex-Role Scale used by Mason and Bumpass

(1975) and the Sex-Role Attitude Measurement of Thornton et al. (1983). The items measure different aspects of male-female role definitions. They cover in general, attitudes towards married working women and specific issues such as the desirability of the traditional sex-based division of social responsibilities (that is, there are some works that are men's and some that are women's and they should not be doing each other's); the rights of women workers (a woman should have exactly the same job opportunities as man. Men and women should be paid the same salary if they do the same work); the consequences of maternal employment for the well-being of children (a preschool child is likely to suffer if his mother works); whether working mothers can have emotionally secure relationships with their children (a working mother can establish just as warm and secure relationship with her children as a mother who does not work); whether husbands should share housework with wives (a wife should not expect her husband to help around the house when he comes home after a hard day's work); who should make decisions in the family (the important decisions in the family should be made by the man of the house); and various stereotypes about women and the conditions under which they are happy and can function best (women will be much happier if they stay at home and take care of their children; it is important for a wife to help her husband's career than to have a career herself; a man can make long-range plans for his life but a woman has to take things as they come).

The items of sex-role attitudes consist of statements supporting either a traditional or an egalitarian attitude to sex-roles, with which each respondent could strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree. A maximum score of four was assigned for an egalitarian response and a minimum score of one for a traditional response. On the basis of the mean score the respondents were categorized as traditional (below mean) and egalitarian (above mean).

The scores of the respondents on sex-role attitudes ranged from 13 to 40. The mean score was 22.51. Out of the total sample, 45 per cent came under egalitarian category and the rest under traditional. The mean score of the sub-samples of arts female, science female, engineering female

and engineering male were 13.62, 20.21, 29.1 and 21.69 respectively. Engineering female sample constituted the largest proportion (44 per cent) of those who had egalitarian attitudes to sex-roles and arts female sample the lowest proportion (11 per cent). Science female sample made up 19 per cent and engineering male sample 26 per cent.

Analysis and Discussion

Family Background

Analysis of the data in Table 2 reveals that in general the association between the family background variables and sex-role attitudes is weak. The study had expected family background, particularly the socio-economic position to discriminate respondents in terms of their sex-role attitudes. However, the educational background of the family was found to be quite significant. Since the education level of majority of the respondents' mothers (70 per cent) was below secondary level, it was the father's education that seemed to be significant for the sex-role orientation of the respondents. Indira's study (1982) has pointed out the significance of father's educational attainment in influencing the educational and career choices of girls.

Table 2 shows the relationship between father's educational level and the sex-role attitudes of the respondents. About 24.6 per cent of the sample have fathers with below secondary level education. The rest are distributed under graduate, post graduate, technical diploma and professional level education. Note that the higher education of father is closely linked with the egalitarian sex-role attitudes of the respondents and vice versa. The best illustration of the association between sex-role modernity and father's education level is found in the responses of the engineering female sample.

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents according to their father's occupation and the association of this variable with the sex-role attitudes of the respondents. Agriculture is generally associated with tradition rather than modernity. Therefore, the traditional orientation of the majority of respondents coming from agricultural background is understandable. The arts female sub-sample constitute

TABLE 2
FATHER'S EDUCATION LEVEL AND SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES

		Below Secondary			Graduate			Postgraduate			Technical-Diploma.			Professional	
		Trad.	Egal.	Trad.	Egal.	Trad.	Egal.	Trad.	Egal.	Trad.	Egal.	Trad.	Egal.	Trad.	Total
Females															
Arts	12 (37.5)	3 (9.4)	5 (15.5)	2 (6.3)	3 (9.4)	1 (3.1)	3 (9.4)	-	2 (6.3)	-	1 (3.1)	2 (6.3)	1 (3.1)	32	
Science	3 (10.7)	- (-)	8 (28.6)	4 (14.3)	3 (10.7)	4 (14.3)	2 (7.1)	1 (3.6)	1 (-)	1 (-)	3 (10.7)	3 (-)	3 (-)	28	
Engineering	1 (5.2)	1 (3.2)	2 (6.4)	10 (32.4)	- (-)	4 (12.9)	1 (3.2)	4 (12.9)	4 (6.4)	2 (6.4)	6 (19.4)	6 (19.4)	6 (19.4)	31	
Males															
Engineering	8 (22.9)	3 (8.6)	4 (11.4)	2 (5.7)	5 (14.3)	6 (17.1)	2 (5.7)	2 (5.7)	2 (5.7)	1 (2.9)	2 (5.7)	1 (2.9)	2 (5.7)	35	
Total:	24 (19.0)	7 (5.6)	19 (15.1)	18 (14.3)	11 (8.7)	15 (11.9)	8 (6.3)	7 (5.6)	5 (4.0)	12 (4.0)	126 (9.5)				

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

TABLE 3
FATHER'S OCCUPATION AND SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES

	Agriculture	Business	Professional	Executive	Non-executive	Others	
	Trad.	Egal.	Trad.	Egal.	Trad.	Egal.	Total
Females							
Arts	12 (37.5)	3 (9.4)	1 (3.1)	1 (3.1)	5 (15.6)	2 (6.3)	- (-)
Science	3 (10.7)	1 (3.6)	2 (7.1)	1 (3.6)	7 (25.0)	7 (25.0)	- (-)
Engineering	1 (3.2)	2 (6.5)	- (-)	2 (6.5)	3 (9.7)	7 (22.6)	1 (3.2)
Males							
Engineering	2 (5.7)	1 (2.8)	2 (5.7)	2 (5.7)	3 (8.6)	5 (14.3)	8 (22.9)
Total:	18 (14.3)	7 (5.5)	5 (4.0)	6 (4.8)	13 (10.3)	19 (15.1)	21 (16.6)
							126 (-)

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

the majority with agricultural background. Although, those with business background are few, the relative modernity of those coming from this background is expected because business is generally associated with economic rationality. Three occupational categories that come under the modern sector of employment are Professionals, Executives and Non-executives. The nature of their occupation and the environment in which they work have a modernizing influence on them. Besides, professionals and executives have greater exposure to education. As a result of these they tend to be less traditional and this, in turn, has influenced the outlook of their children. It is noticed that the close association between these occupational backgrounds of fathers and the sex-role attitudes these occupational backgrounds of fathers and the sex-role attitudes is not evident in the arts sample. What does this imply ? Is there another stronger influence that neutralizes the modern occupational background of the father? Perhaps the low educational level of the mothers is an explanation. Nearly 80 per cent of the arts females have mothers with education below secondary level. As mother is the key figure in early socialization in the family, mother's attitudes are bound to have some impact on the offsprings.

The association between maternal employment and sex-role attitudes of the sample is seen in Table 4. Although the percentage of the sample having working mothers constitutes only 17.5, there is a clear indication that maternal employment does predispose respondents to egalitarian sex-role attitudes. The fact that there is a high proportion of respondents with egalitarian sex-role attitudes even among those with unemployed mothers suggests that maternal employment is not a sufficient factor to explain the modern orientation of respondents. Perhaps it should be viewed along with the availability of role models for the respondents. Role model here refers to whether or not the female respondents had a close female relative who was working and if the respondent perceived this working woman as successfully playing her dual role. A good example here is the engineering female sample, among whom 61 per cent of those with egalitarian sex-role orientation had successful role models to emulate. Socialization theorists have pointed out that the content of early socialization is influenced not only by the

TABLE 4
MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT AND SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES

	Mother Employed			Mother Unemployed		Total
	Traditional	Egalitarian	Traditional	Traditional	Egalitarian	
Females						
Arts	3 (9)	4 (13)		23 (72)	2 (6)	32
Science	*	4 (14)		17 (61)	7 (25)	28
Engineering	1 (3)	6 (20)		5 (16)	19 (61)	31
Males						
Engineering	3 (9)	1 (3)		17 (48)	14 (40)	35
Total:	7 (6)	15 (12)		62 (49)	42 (33)	126

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

environment of the home but also by the role models provided.

Mother's employment has certain other implications also. The time available for the working mother at home is limited. Therefore, she is forced to organize her time well and cannot encourage undue dependence on her by the children. This in the long run develops independence and confidence in her children. The significance of maternal employment in shaping sex-role beliefs of offsprings has been supported by the studies of Mason and Bumpass (1975), Spitze (1978) and Thornton et al. (1983).

The association between rural/urban background and the respondents' attitudes to sex-roles is seen in Table 5. The finding that the urban sample is more egalitarian in their orientation is not surprising. With urban environment goes better educational and occupational opportunities, cosmopolitanism and exposure to modernizing influences like the mass media and modern organizations. Thus urban environment itself is a modernizing influence on individuals. Further, urban areas also offer better economic opportunities. So it appears that geographic mobility (from rural to urban area) brings not only social mobility (in terms of better jobs and positions) but also psychic mobility (empathy, an important trait of modernity as pointed out by Lerner, 1964).

The influence of urban background on the sample in terms of their orientation to sex-roles should be viewed in the light of the influence of father's educational background (Table 2) and occupational background (Table 3). It is noted that a pattern of association can be seen between father's low level of education, agricultural background, rural background and traditional orientation of the respondents. However, the arts female sample seems to be an exception which indicates no pattern of association between rural background and traditional orientation.

Table 6 shows the association between home environment and attitudes to sex roles. Home environment, in terms of it being democratic or autocratic is important for the development of traits like independence, activism and self-confidence. An autocratic home is where only the father makes all the decisions, where parents overprotect the children, particularly girls, by being unduly strict with them, and do not involve the children when making major decisions.

TABLE 5
RURAL/URBAN BACKGROUND AND SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES

	Rural		Urban		Total
	Traditional	Egalitarian	Traditional	Egalitarian	
Females					
Arts	8 (25)	4 (13)	18 (56)	2 (6)	32
Science	8 (29)	5 (18)	9 (32)	6 (21)	28
Engineering	3 (10)	7 (22)	3 (10)	18 (58)	31
Males					
Engineering	6 (17)	4 (11)	14 (40)	11 (32)	35
Total:	25 (19)	20 (16)	44 (35)	37 (30)	126

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

TABLE 6
HOME ENVIRONMENT AND SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES

	Attitudes				Total
	Traditional	Democratic	Egalitarian	Traditional	
Females					
Arts	12 (37)	5 (16)	14 (44)	1 (3)	32
Science	8 (29)	6 (21)	9 (32)	5 (18)	28
Engineering	2 (7)	19 (61)	4 (13)	6 (19)	31
Males					
Engineering	15 (43)	10 (29)	5 (14)	5 (14)	35
Total:	37 (29)	40 (32)	32 (25)	17 (14)	126

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages

pertaining to their future. Such a home environment tends to develop passivism, dependence and a personality lacking in self-confidence. This, in turn, is expected to influence their outlook and have a consequence on their orientation to sex-roles.

It is found that 61 per cent of the respondents come from democratic home environment. Among these the majority (52 per cent) are egalitarian in their sex-role orientations. It is also clear that a good proportion (70 per cent) of all the respondents who are egalitarian in their orientation have democratic home environment. Thus it is evident that home environment and orientation to sex-role attitudes are closely associated.

Among the other family background variables, one variable that did not indicate any association with the respondents' orientation is family size. Family size is expected to influence the respondent's accessibility to higher education. The more the number of siblings the less is the opportunity for each child because available resources have to be spread out then. But in the case of the sample of the study, in spite of some of the respondents having as large a family as 10 members, they seemed to have gained access to higher education. This being the case, the finding that family size did not discriminate among respondents in terms of their orientation to sex-role is not surprising.

Yet another family background variable that was found not to sharply discriminate among the respondents in terms of the dependent variable was family income. The family income was categorized into less than 1,000, 1,001-2,000, 2,001-3,000, 3,001-4,000 and 4,000 and above. While the majority of the respondents with non-traditional orientation was found to cluster in the higher family income categories, there were also representations of those with traditional orientation. As such, no clear pattern of association was evident.

School Background

Among the school background variables, the medium of instruction did not discriminate among the respondents in terms of their sex-role orientation very well. This was quite contrary to expectation. It was thought that English as the

medium of instruction would liberalize the attitude of the respondents and might even result in their rejection of some of the traditional norms and values. But it is seen that the respondents with egalitarian attitudes are distributed more or less evenly in the two media of instruction (English 23 per cent, Regional language 22 per cent). However, respondents with regional language as medium of instruction are found to constitute 72 per cent of those with traditional orientation to sex roles. This does not necessarily mean that regional language as medium of instruction is associated with traditionalism (Table 7).

Table 7 indicates the type of management of the school and its influence on sex-role attitudes of the respondents. The respondents are found to be more or less evenly distributed between the State government/municipal/Zilla Parishad schools and the private/mission schools (48 per cent and 49 per cent respectively). While the former accounts for the majority of the sample with traditional orientation, the latter accounts for the majority with egalitarian orientation. It is noticed that the respondents from the third category of schools, namely, central schools do not subscribe to traditional orientation at all. The main difference between the first and the other two types of schools is that of quality. While the latter type of schools emphasize on quality the emphasis of the former type is on quantity. After independence when a policy of democratization of educational opportunities was adopted quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement of education did not go hand in hand. When universal enrolment was the goal, quality often suffered. This was the case in schools run by state governments and local bodies, whereas private, mission and central schools have strived to maintain certain standards and quality of education. This difference is reflected in the organization, the teacher-pupil ratio, and in the instructional and infrastructural facilities offered by these schools.

The association between the type of schools and sex-role attitudes indicates that good quality education has a modernizing influence on the students. A sharp pattern of this association is evident in the two engineering samples. This is in conformity with the general finding that the quality of schooling is crucial for gaining access into the prestigious

TABLE 7
SCHOOL BACKGROUND (TYPE OF MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL) AND SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES

	State govt./Municipal/Z.P.	Private/Mission			Central	
		Traditional	Egalitarian	Traditional	Egalitarian	Total
Females						
Arts	16 (50)	4 (13)	10 (31)	2 (6)	-	32
Science	10 (36)	7 (25)	7 (25)	3 (11)	-	28
Engineering	4 (16)	5 (6.5)	2 (6.5)	18 (58)	-	31
Males						
Engineering	10 (28.5)	4 (11.5)	10 (28.5)	10 • (28.5)	-	35
Total:	40 (32)	20 (16)	29 (23)	33 (26)	-	126 (3)

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

institutions of higher education, particularly professional education.

Table 8 shows the distribution of the sample in terms of separate (all girls/all boys) and coeducational school backgrounds and their orientation to sex-roles. About 75 per cent of the respondents come from coeducational background. It is also noted that an overwhelming majority (80 per cent) of those with egalitarian orientation have coeducational background while all the sub-samples support the association between coeducational background and egalitarian orientations. It is clearly evident in the case of female arts and female science samples.

The separate schools are supposedly oriented to the special needs of each sex. But actually they only ensure that boys and girls continue to see their place in the scheme of things in the way they had been conditioned to see. In other words they only reinforce unequal role images and related prejudices. Coeducational schools on the other hand, are not oriented to the special needs of either of the sexes. Boys and girls are treated as students and not as two sexes having different needs. Psychologists have pointed out that coeducation is helpful in the growth of normal and effective personalities and that boys and girls from coeducational schools find adjustment in adult life easier.

The fact that girls have a chance of competing on equal footing with boys on both curricular and extracurricular activities help them to overcome some of the inhibitions instilled in them during early socialization. So coeducational schools seem to have a neutralizing effect on socialization, particularly that of girls.

Table 9 shows the distribution of the sample by way of religiosity and sex-role attitudes. Religiosity refers to the belief in the efficacy of religion over science to explain all phenomena and to solve all problems. As such religiosity is expected to be related to traditionalism rather than non-traditionalism. An overwhelming majority of the sample (80 per cent) is found to be low in religiosity. About 77 per cent of the respondents with egalitarian sex-role attitudes is low in religiosity. This bears out the expected inverse relationship between religiosity and non-traditionalism. It is also in conformity with the general expectation of an inverse

TABLE 8
ALL GIRLS/ ALL BOYS AND COEDUCATIONAL SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES.

	Coeducation			All Girls/ All Boys		Total
	Traditional	Egalitarian	Traditional	All Girls/ All Boys	Egalitarian	
Females						
Arts	17 (53)	6 (19)	9 (28)	-	-	32
Science	13 (47)	11 (39)	4 (14)	-	-	28
Engineering	4 (13)	19 (61)	2 (7)	6 (19)	6 (19)	31
Males						
Engineering	15 (43)	10 (29)	5 (14)	5 (14)	5 (14)	35
Total:	49 (39)	46 (36)	20 (16)	11 (9)	11 (9)	126

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

TABLE 9
RELIGIOSITY AND SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES

	High Religiosity			Low Religiosity		Total
	Traditional	Egalitarian	Traditional	Egalitarian		
Females						
Arts	6 (19)	- (-)	20 (62)	6 (19)	32	
Science	4 (14)	3 (11)	13 (46)	8 (29)	28	
Engineering	- (-)	6 (19)	6 (19)	19 (62)	31	
Males						
Engineering	4 (12)	4 (12)	16 (45)	11 (31)	35	
Total:	14 (11)	13 (13)	55 (44)	44 (35)	126	

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

relationship between higher education and religiosity. By the same logic, an inverse relationship between religiosity and activism was not found to be associated with non-traditionalism in the present sample. Only the engineering male sub-sample has indicated an association, though weak, between activism and non-traditionalism and an inverse relationship between activism and religiosity. It is quite surprising that even the engineering females who constitute the majority of the egalitarian category, exhibit very little activism. This means that at least in the case of the female samples activism is not a variable independently influencing the sex-role orientations of the sample.

Feminist theorists point out that lack of independence training and autonomy among girls becomes a permanent handicap at the higher stage of education and in the choice of a career. While parents encourage freedom, independence and risk-taking in boys, girls are encouraged towards cultural conformity and dependency. This conditioning begins at home and is reinforced by the society. The media and the literary sources promote this image. Today even as more and more girls are motivated to take up higher education and paid employment, the expectation is that they are not to overstep their limits — not to step out of the "Lakshmana-rekha" set for them. In this context, the measurement of the level of independence and its association with sex-role orientation of the sample became necessary.

Table 10 shows the distribution of the sample according to the independence and traditional/egalitarian orientations. A close association between independent outlook and egalitarian orientation can be seen. It is noted that 58 per cent of the sample have an independent outlook and that 68 per cent of them are also egalitarian in their orientation to sex-roles. The responses to the items measuring independence in the sample show that girls who had been socialized into docility, blind obedience and total dependence are beginning to develop independent thinking. This, in turn, would liberalize their attitudes to sex-roles.

Table 11 illustrates the association between career aspirations and sex-role attitudes. It is logical to expect career aspirations to be associated with sex-role attitudes favouring women's employment. The Table shows that 74 per cent of

TABLE 10
CAREER ASPIRATION AND SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES

	High Aspiration			Low Aspiration			Total
	Traditional	Egalitarian	Traditional	Traditional	Egalitarian		
Females							
Arts	10 (31)	5 (16)	16 (50)	1 (3)	32		
Science	11 (39)	8 (29)	6 (21)	3 (11)	28		
Engineering	3 (10)	22 (70)	3 (10)	3 (10)	31		
Males							
Engineering	20 (57)	14 (40)	0 (-)	1 (3)	35		
Total:	44 (35)	49 (39)	25 (20)	8 (6)	126		

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages

TABLE 11
DEPENDENCE AND SEX-ROLE ATTITUDES

	Independence			Dependence		Total
	Traditional	Egalitarian	Traditional	Egalitarian		
Females						
Arts	10 (31)	4 (13)	16 (50)	2 (6)	32	
Science	10 (36)	10 (36)	7 (25)	1 (3)	28	
Engineering	6 (19)	14 (45)	-	11 (36)	31	
Males						
Engineering	11 (31)	8 (23)	9 (26)	7 (20)	35	
Total:	37 (29)	36 (29)	32 (25)	21 (17)	126	

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages

the sample has high career aspirations and that 84 per cent of the sample having non-traditional orientations come under the high aspiration category. The close association between aspiration and non-traditionalism is clearly evident in all the sub-samples. When asked what they planned to do after the completion of their education, a good majority of the sample have indicated, "Seek job". Further, when asked if they would work even if there was no financial compulsion to work, majority had responded positively. This indicates not only career aspiration but also a commitment to work. Career aspiration is highest in the engineering male sample, followed by engineering female, science female and arts female. The higher career aspiration of the professional students indicates that career aspirations are not unrealistic and that they are related to possible career opportunities.

Last of all, higher education is examined as an independent variable influencing sex-role attitudes. The data presented above indicate that while higher education neutralizes some of the background variables as for example, the economic background, its influence is not uniform. Its influence is less evident in the arts and science samples when compared to the engineering sample; particularly the female sample. Does it have anything to do with engineering being a professional course? Perhaps not. But it has to do with what higher education means to each of the respondent. For a section of female students higher education is only an end in itself and has no instrumental value. There are the others (like some of the respondents in the study who, when asked why they have joined their course had indicated "to get a job") who have intentions to work after the completion of their studies although they have no clear objective as to the type of employment they want. They go through education for its label but not necessarily to receive education. As such, higher education has only superficial influence on them. On the other hand there is a category of students who relate education to their specific career goals. This is the group that is likely to be touched by education. This implies that it is not higher education as such that neutralizes negative background and liberalizes sex-role attitudes but the extent to which it has relevance for the individual. It is logical to expect that access to an education with definite employment opportunities would predispose girls to subjectively invest in the

work role. This would in turn change their orientation to sex-roles in the non-traditional direction. The data reveal that engineering education has a strong influence on the sex-role attitudes of the respondents. This is illustrated by the high egalitarian scores of the female engineering sample. The fact that they are oriented to a definite career and consequently attach instrumental value to higher education should explain the change in attitudes.

Conclusion

The analysis of the determinants of sex-role attitudes show that while both family and school are responsible for the socialization of sex-role attitudes, the influence of the family is found to be stronger. Particularly strong is the influence of the socio-economic position of the family like father's education, father's occupation and maternal employment. High educational attainment of the father was found to influence the sex-role attitudes of the respondents in the positive direction. Regarding the occupational background of the father, it was those occupational categories that came under the modern sectors of employment that were facilitative of modern orientations in the children. Likewise, just the fact that mother was employed seemed to make a difference for the orientation of her children. Yet another facilitating factor, particularly for the engineering female sample was the availability of a role model like a close relative working woman who could be emulated.

Other family background variables which were found to be associated with sex-role attitudes were home environment (autocratic/democratic) and rural/urban background. Further, those with democratic home background were found to be more egalitarian in their orientation. This is so because a democratic environment promotes traits like independent thinking activism and self-confidence. Quite surprisingly the economic background and size of the family did not discriminate respondents in terms of sex-role attitudes.

Among the school background variables medium of instruction was not found to influence the dependent variable while type of management the school had, did. It was the

private/mission and central school background that was found to be facilitative of modern orientations. Perhaps this had to do with the better quality of education imparted in these schools.

Among the personality variables religiosity was found to be inversely associated with liberal sex-role attitudes. Another personality variable that was positively associated with sex-role attitudes was independence. For the female sample the development of independent thinking was found to be crucial in bringing about change in traditional sex-role attitudes. This finding is in conformity with the influence of a democratic home environment. The influence of higher education on sex-role attitudes was also examined. It was found that higher education *per se* did not liberalize sex-role orientations. Whether it influenced respondents in the positive direction or not depended on what value was attached to education — an instrumental or consummatory value.

The under-representation of women in engineering education can best be explained by cultural values, beliefs and practices that influence girls in their choice of higher study and also by the attitude of parents and teachers who do not believe in engineering education for girls. This means that the barriers to women's engineering education are structural and cultural rather than the alleged sex differences in cognitive capabilities. To start with, there are the stereotypes about engineering profession being a masculine domain. Then there is the range of influences at work to persuade girls that engineering profession is not for them. This includes the socialization process that channels girl's aspirations away from such a male domain. Given this conditioning it is not surprising that 49 per cent of the engineering female sample believed that "women are not biologically suited for careers in most branches of engineering;" 30 per cent of the same sample also believed that "it was double loss to parents to give professional education to daughters because they have to pay for the education as well as give dowry." These examples should explain why girls are not motivated to opt for engineering education.

It is a well-known fact that engineering education is not even an option unless students have a good foundation in mathematics and science. Do parents or teachers encourage

the girls to acquire this foundation? If not, is it little wonder that engineering is a sector of higher education with the lowest female participation? Nevertheless, girls are gaining entry into engineering education in small but steadily growing numbers. Despite all the barriers mentioned, if these girls are able to do so, it could mean that some of the negative influences are getting neutralized to make their orientations more egalitarian. It could also mean that some background factors are facilitating rather than impeding them.

THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

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and
Susan Verghese

India has embarked on an ambitious programme of economic modernization. As part of the New Economic Policy, a close link between higher education and economy is envisaged. The development of human resources is given high priority in the Eighth Plan but opinion tends to favour public expenditure for lower levels of education rather than higher education. Quality education for women, however, is recognized as a prerequisite for the modernization of the economy and the society. While modernization and upgradation is to receive high priority in the sphere of higher and technical education, the policy is to make higher education self-financing as far as possible. There are cuts in governmental funding of higher education but alternate funding provision is made by encouraging industries to interact with and utilize facilities available in the institutions of higher learning. An upward revision of tuition fees is also suggested. In other words, colleges and universities are to mobilize resources on their own by making users pay for the cost of education and research facilities. It also means that more accountability in terms of the quality and relevance of the education imparted and services rendered by these institutions of higher education will be demanded. This will call for orienting the educational system to reflect the changed needs of the economy.

The New Education Policy and the Revised Education Policy reflect these shifting priorities in the field of higher education. "A guiding consideration in the planning and management of education is its integration with the country's development and manpower needs." With regard to women, the New Education Policy emphasizes

gender equity in education — "In order to neutralize the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well-conceived edge in favour of women and the National system of education will play a positive interventionist role in the empowerment of women."

Together the economic and educational policies present new challenges and opportunities for women. But is the Indian woman equipped to meet these challenges and take advantage of these opportunities? Is she able to disorient herself from the traditional value orientations imbibed through socialization so as to orient herself to the new role expectations that are called for?

There has been enormous growth in enrolment in higher education during the last 30 years from 1960-61 to 1990-91. From 6.45 lakhs in 1960-61 the enrolment has gone up to 44.3 lakhs in 1990-91. The percentage of women students has gone up from 10.1 to 32.5 during this period. Despite the increase in enrolment of women in higher education, women's participation in the economy did not keep pace. Women employed before marriage willingly gave it up after marriage. Non-utilization of valuable education was perceived as a virtue rather than a crime. This obviously reflects traditional notions of gender-role expectations imbibed through the process of socialization. But today, a sizeable proportion of women is opting full-time work. The reasons could be varied. To start with, employment for women has come to have better social acceptance. It could also be the rising standards and cost of living making a twin-income family desirable and even necessary. Then there are those who opt to work because they feel the need for an identity of their own. Whatever the case, the motivation for working will determine the commitment to the work role. This in turn will be reflected in a shift in the attitudes and values concerning appropriate roles for men and women in the family and workplace. The present study assumes that a woman who feels that she can combine her family role with work role is likely to have egalitarian attitudes to sex-roles. Such a woman feels that her employment need not harm her children or marital relationship and that her place is not necessarily in the home. Perceiving that such a change in sex-role attitudes is likely to facilitate greater economic participation of women, a study to investigate the sex-role attitudes of a

sample of female students from higher education was undertaken. The assumption of the study was that liberalized attitudes to sex-roles have a positive influence on the career orientation of female students.

An earlier study made by the same researchers on a sample of students from the faculties of arts, science and engineering of Andhra University had revealed that female engineering students were more liberal in their sex-role attitudes. This prompted the study of another sample of professional students to further examine the association between professional education and liberal attitudes to sex-roles.

The causes and consequences of sex-role attitudes have been investigated by several researchers (Spitze, 1978; Kazl and Ghadially, 1978; Thornton et al., 1983; Beilby and Beilby, 1984; Jaiswal, 1991 and Verghese, Rao and Pagnis, 1992).

The present study examines the association of sex-role attitudes with certain background variables of the respondents. Since the family and school are the major agents of gender-role socialization, these background variables are related to the family and the school.

Socialization refers to the process by which people interact with others to learn the ways of their culture in order to function within it. Through socialization, one develops social self and individual personality.

The early childhood socialization is referred to as primary socialization. The family is the most important agent of socialization. One reason for this is that the self-concept formed during childhood has lasting consequences and individuals are strongly conditioned by the childhood experiences. The family is also an important agent of socialization in that, in addition to nurturing the child, the family also gives the child its position in the social structure in terms of social class, ethnicity and religion. The location of the family in the class structure of society based on socio-economic status has an enormous effect on the socialization of the children. The educational level of parents affects their overall approach to child-rearing — how they discipline the children, what type of schools are chosen for the children, what kind of books, toys and instructional materials are

given to the children and what role models are provided. The economic standing of the parents has significant indirect effects on the process of socialization — it determines the neighbourhood in which a child grows up, the kind of peers the child will play with and things as fundamental as good health and diet.

The family thus provides a background that determines much of the child's experiences. From birth onwards, children receive very clear gender-typed messages about what boys and girls are supposed to do. The end product is typically a person who fits the cultural definition of feminine or masculine model. Differential socialization because it is so deeply ingrained in everyday activities will be extremely difficult to change. The family then begins the process of socialization and lays the foundation of the future of the child in direct and indirect ways.

The major agent of secondary socialization is the school. Primarily we think of the school as teaching the intellectual skills necessary for effective participation in society. In addition to the stated school curricula, there is the 'hidden curriculum'. One major aspect of the 'hidden curriculum' is the cultivation of traditional sex-role behaviours among boys and girls. Given different standards of conduct in school, boys are encouraged to be aggressive, explorative, independent and dominant. Girls are expected to be feminine, submissive and dependent.

According to Cooley's concept of 'looking-glass self', we learn to view ourselves as we think others view us. These self-concepts, in turn, influence behaviour. Gender-role socialization not only perpetuates the traditional behavioural differences between the sexes, but has other consequences as well. Socialization of boys better prepares them for the occupational world, for competition and assertiveness. Girls brought up traditionally may have more trouble adjusting to the work world. Girls tend to have problems with self-esteem and self-confidence. They are less certain that they can accomplish various tasks either because they have been told that they are less capable or because they lack experience and the reassurance that they can succeed.

Gender-role socialization is sometimes described as the making of cages that restrict full development of human

beings. Feminists have argued that an individual, whether male or female, should not be caged by rigid expectations of gender behaviour.

Data and Method

The data were collected through self-administered questionnaires which elicited information on the influence of early socialization on the sex-role attitudes of a random sample of female students from higher education. The sample consisted of 32 students from arts faculty, 28 from science faculty, 31 from engineering faculty and 29 from medical faculty of Andhra University. The mean age of the sub-sample was 24, 22, 21, and 22 respectively. The background variables that were thought to be significant for this study were family background variables consisting of socio-economic position of the family (father's education, father's occupation, mother's education, maternal employment, family income and family size) and rural/urban background. Since the content of socialization is influenced by the environment of the home and the role-models available in the household, home environment (whether autocratic or democratic) and availability of role-model were also included as variables. Neither religion nor caste background was considered. School background variables considered were type of school (separate or coeducation schools), type of management of the school and medium of instruction in the school.

Personality variables such as occupational aspiration, level of independence level, of activism and religiosity were also considered.

Lastly the variation in the liberalizing influence of different faculties of higher education on sex-role attitudes was also investigated.

Sex-role Attitudes: Definition and Measurement

The roles of men and women have changed in the last decades. Although the occupational world is still heavily segregated by sex, women are increasingly gaining foothold in professional and other high-paying, high-status jobs. Despite the many changes in women's employment roles in

the recent decades there have been few changes in the domestic division of labour. Child care is still largely viewed as a woman's responsibility. Biology dictates that only women can bear children. But the subsequent care of the child is not so clearly a biological imperative. Continued responsibility for child care is one factor that impedes woman's achievement outside the household. However, in the recent years, a marginal increase in the willingness of men to share such responsibilities is seen. There are other areas reflecting traditional sex-role attitudes that clearly do not favour the working woman, stereotyped images of men and women suggest that men are more rational than women and, therefore, should have "the final say" at home. Again, when both husband and wife are working, it is assumed that the husband is the primary breadwinner and, therefore, if the need arises, wife should be willing to give up her job to facilitate her husband's success in his career.

However, attitudes are changing gradually and support for traditional sex-role norms is decreasing. While men are less ready to accept egalitarian sex-role norms, educated women are beginning to realize that unless there is a change in the sex-role norms, they will not be able to cope with their dual roles (family role and work role) successfully. It is in this context that the extent of change in sex-role attitudes of the female students in higher education was studied.

Analysis and Discussion

Family Background

Analysis of the data reveals that in general the family background variables did not discriminate the respondents very well in terms of their sex-role attitudes. Quite contrary to expectation, family income as an independent variable had no significant effect on sex-role attitudes. However, it has been the repeated experience of many researchers that family income is not a reliable indication of the socio-economic status of a family because accurate information about the family income is difficult to generate. But the educational background of the family was found to be highly significant. Majority of the sample had mothers with low levels of education (below secondary school level). Therefore, it was the educational attainment of fathers that was found

to influence the sex-role attitudes of the respondents. The educational background of fathers which was found to be most facilitative of egalitarian sex-role attitudes among the respondents were graduate, postgraduates, or professionals. About 90 per cent of the engineering sample and 96 per cent of the medical sample had highly educated fathers.

Another important variable that discriminated the respondents in terms of their sex-role attitudes was father's occupation. It was found that differences in the nature of occupation tend to produce different attitudes and outlook. Agriculture being a traditional sector of work, it is not surprising that agricultural background does not foster liberal attitudes in the respondents from this background.

The traditional orientation of the arts sub-sample can be understood in the light of their predominantly agricultural background. Applying the same logic, the liberal outlook of the respondents with fathers in the occupational categories such as professional, executive and government service can be understood. It appears that the child-rearing practices of these families from higher socio-economic background foster high achievement motivation in their children and as such have position influence on their attitudes.

Two other family background variables that were found to be associated with liberal sex-role attitudes were maternal employment and availability of role-model. Respondents whose mothers worked when they were children and respondents who had exposure to positive role-models held less traditional views and embraced more egalitarian views about combining work and family roles. Only 24 per cent of the sample had working mothers whereas 55 per cent of the sample had female relatives who were successful working women. It was mainly the engineering and medical sub-samples that were found to be exposed to positive role-models.

Yet another way in which the family background seems to influence the sex-role attitudes of the respondents is in terms of the neighbourhood in which the child grows up. In India, rural areas are more associated with poverty than affluence. The rural child is also deprived of many of the cultural stimuli to which the urban child is exposed. As such, the rural child is culturally deprived as compared to

his urban counterpart. This in turn will determine his attitudes negatively. The present study bears out such an association. The respondents with urban background are found to be more egalitarian in their attitudes as compared to the ones with rural background.

Home environment was categorized into democratic and autocratic. The expectation was that democratic homes will foster non-traditional orientations. This was borne out by the data. About 64 per cent of the sample come from democratic home environment. Out of these an overwhelming majority (83 per cent) was found to have egalitarian sex-role in the sample.

Among the other family background variables, one variable that was not found significant at all, was family size. This was quite contrary to expectation. We tend to associate large families with traditionalism. But no such association was evident in the sample.

Among the school background variables; medium of instruction was not found to be closely associated with the dependent variable except in the case of the respondents from medicine. The distribution of the sample is more or less equal between English medium and vernacular medium backgrounds. However, the type of management of the school as a variable was found to be relevant. The type of management has reference to whether a school was managed by State and local bodies or had private management. Yet another category was central schools that come under Central government. The type of management has significance for the quality of education imparted. Respondents from central schools constitute a mere 3 per cent. The data reveals that there is a definite association between privately managed school background and egalitarian orientations of the respondents. All the respondents from central schools also scored high and were found to be egalitarian in their attitudes. This implies that quality of education in terms of the content of education has a liberalizing influence. Almost 85 per cent of the respondents who come from privately managed schools are found to have egalitarian orientations. This pattern is very well illustrated by the engineering and medical samples. The next school background variable considered was coeducational/separate schools. About 70 per cent of the respondents come from coeducational background. An

overwhelming majority (80 per cent) of these are found to have egalitarian sex-role attitudes. Most parents of girls prefer to send their daughters to exclusive schools for girls. The obvious reason given is that these schools cater for the special needs of the girls. A not so explicit reason is that they do not want their daughters to mix up with the opposite sex. This kind of overprotection can only have a negative impact on the girls. This is borne out by the data. The respondents who have come from "all girls" schools are found to be more traditional in their sex-role attitudes.

Among the personality variables, the influence of religiosity on sex-role attitudes was examined. An overwhelming majority of the sample (82 per cent) is found to be low in religiosity. Out of these 77 per cent of the respondents had egalitarian sex-role attitudes. This bears out the expected inverse relationship between religiosity and non-traditionalism. By the same logic, an inverse relationship between religiosity and activism can also be expected. But quite contrary to expectation, activism was not found to be associated with non-traditionalism in the majority of the sample. Only the medical sample has indicated an association between activism and non-traditionalism and the expected inverse relationship between activism and religiosity. This means that the average female still has not broken free of the passivism into which she has been socialized.

Level of independence was another variable examined for its association with sex-role attitudes. Almost, 58 per cent of the sample is found to have independent thinking and out of these 75 per cent are found to be egalitarian in their attitudes.

The fact that 42 per cent of the sample continue to be dependent in their thinking is alarming. Girls brought up traditionally are socialized for cultural conformity and dependency. Such girls have trouble adjusting to the workplace where their behavioural patterns like submissiveness and dependence are not likely to serve them well. On the other hand, if a girl through the socialization she received at home or at school, is encouraged to be independent she is likely to be better oriented to the work role.

When career aspiration was examined for its influence on sex role attitudes, it was found that 70 per cent of the sample

had high career aspirations and 90 per cent of them were non-traditional in their sex-role attitudes. The close association between career aspiration and non-traditionalism is clearly evident in all the samples. The association between career aspiration and egalitarian sex-role attitudes is the closest in the medical sample followed by engineering, science and arts sample in that order. Further, the higher rate of career aspiration found in the sample from the two professional courses (medicine and engineering) indicate that these career aspirations are not unrealistic and they are related to possible career opportunities.

Lastly, higher education is examined as an independent variable. The influence of higher education on sex-role attitudes seems to vary with the different faculties. The medical sub-sample is found to be most egalitarian in sex-role attitudes, next comes the engineering sample. The science and arts sub-samples are low in egalitarian orientation, the arts sample being the lowest. Does it mean that professional education has a more modernizing influence on sex-role attitudes? To a certain degree it is true that those who opt for professional education are generally career motivated and this predisposes them to subjectively invest in the work role. It could also be true that these students look upon education as the means to achieve their career aspirations and to that extent education is relevant and has instrumental value for them. In the case of the science and arts sub-samples, they know that their education offers no guarantee for employment and, therefore, they do not attach any instrumental value to it. For them higher education is consequential only for the certification it gave. On the other hand, it could also mean that it is the students from the better-off backgrounds that gain access to the professional courses. These backgrounds reflect not merely higher socio-economic status but perhaps also positive socialization experiences since child-rearing practices are very closely linked with class background. This means that sex-role attitudes could be both the cause and the consequence of the motivation for professional education.

Conclusion

The present study has examined the early socialization

experiences in the family and school as determinants of sex-role attitudes. The neutralizing influence of higher education on structural factors was also examined. Further, the relationship of certain personality variables like independence, career aspiration, activism and religiosity to sex-role attitudes was also explored. Of all the factors, certain family background factors like father's education, father's occupation, maternal employment, availability of role-model, urban background and home environment are found to be closely associated with sex-role attitudes.

The expectation would have been for mother's education to be more consequential for the daughter's attitudes. But the majority of the respondents in the sample had mothers with low levels of education. However, the finding that the higher educational attainments of the father was directly related to the liberal attitudes of the respondents indicates how significant the educational background of the family in terms of 'significant others' is.

It is logical to expect that the father's occupation will directly influence the career motivation and work role orientation of the daughter. The finding that fathers in the modern sector of occupation influenced the attitudes of their daughters in the liberal direction is in keeping with the finding on father's education. Consistent with these two findings is the finding of the positive influence of urban background on sex-role attitudes of the respondents. Yet another finding that seems to tie in with these findings is the direct relationship borne out by the data between democratic home environment and liberal sex-role attitudes of the respondents.

The highly educated father is likely to have an occupation in the modern sector. Quite apart from the financial resources available, such an occupation would imply exposure to a number of modernizing influences like modern organizations, mass media, urban life, travel and universalistic norms. Further, such a background of the family would influence the overall approach to child rearing, the kind of environment provided at home, what goals are set, what role-models are provided, the attention and stimulus given and the type of schools selected for children. These high status parents also transmit 'cultural capital' to their children which gives them

definite built-in advantages in life.

As expected, maternal employment was found to be directly related to liberal sex-role attitudes. However, the proportion of the sample who had working mothers was small. Therefore, what was more significant for the liberal orientation of the sample of the work role was the availability of role models such as a working woman relative who had successfully integrated her dual roles. Majority of the engineering and medical samples had indicated the presence of such a role-model in their family circles.

Among the social background variables medium of instruction was found to have no influence on the dependent variable, whereas the quality of education imparted in the school was found to be significant. It was the private/mission/central school background that was found to influence the respondents' attitudes in the modern direction. Between coeducational and separate schools, it was the coeducational schools that were found to be facilitative of egalitarian orientations. Perhaps, because the 'hidden curriculam' was less operative in the coeducational schools.

Among the personality variables low religiosity was found to be closely associated with egalitarian sex-role attitudes. Low religiosity was also expected to be consistent with high activism. However, quite contrary to expectations, not all those who were low in religiosity were high in activism. Such an associations was seen only in the medical sample.

Career aspiration was another personality variable that was found to be closely related to egalitarian attitudes in the sample. The higher level of career aspiration in the two professional course samples suggests that their career aspirations are not unrealistic but are related to possible career opportunities.

Only just over half of the sample scored high in independence. Although majority of those who were high in independence also had egalitarian sex-role attitudes, the association was not found to be very strong. This is not surprising considering the fact that dependence and cultural conformity have more emphasis rather than independence and autonomy in the socialization of the female.

With regard to sex-role attitudes, it was the medical and engineering samples that were found to have more egalitarian

attitudes, followed by the science and arts samples. Apparently, even the respondents who were found to be highly egalitarian in their outlook could not agree with some of the items that measured sex-role attitudes. These items related to potential conflict between work and maternal role. Majority of the respondents reflected traditional response when they expressed their belief that the husband's career should have priority over the wife's.

When higher education was examined as a neutralizing agent of the negative impact of structural factors, it was found that the impact of higher education was not uniform. The extent to which higher education liberalized sex-role attitudes seemed to depend directly on the relevance of higher education for the individual. It also indicated that the relationship between higher education and liberal sex-role attitudes was found to be closer in the engineering and medical samples. It appears that egalitarian sex-role attitudes are both the cause and consequence of the motivation for professional education.

The results reported here demonstrate that higher education *per se* does not liberalize sex-role attitudes. It is higher education that offers definite career opportunities that foster egalitarian sex-role attitudes. Positive socialization experiences seem to increase accessibility to the kind of education that offers definite career opportunities. While early socialization seems to be a determinant of sex-role attitudes, what needs to be established is whether non-traditional sex-role attitudes would facilitate better work commitment in women. To examine this, a further study that explores the relationship between sex-role attitudes and work commitment on a sample of working women is suggested. Subjective investment in the work role at the student stage means nothing if at a later date there is a shift in their subjective investment in favour of family roles, as marriage and motherhood come along. Combining work and family role should become a viable lifestyle for the woman if she has to participate effectively in the economy.

SECTION III

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

CASTE AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LABOUR-MARKETS

A Study of Landless Poor

M. Indira Devi

Rural women constitute the overwhelming majority of women in developing countries. However, empirical evidence on the various facets of rural women's participation in work is rather limited. Much of the research on employment and unemployment, though focused attention on sex differences in labour force participation, is done by economists and as such social and institutional aspects effecting women's participation have not received adequate attention.

Efforts at understanding women's participation in work outside the home becomes incomplete and fails to reveal the reality, if it fails to take cognizance of the social and cultural values, centred round their participation in labour-market. The available evidence does not offer clear answers to the questions, viz; Whether women's participation rates vary, even among the poorer strata; What are the contributing factors for differential participation; Whether these differences persist even among those in the extreme poverty; Is there segregation in the labour-market based on caste: and related issues are more or less open. As yet sociological research on women and work is very limited. Further, it also mixed up caste and class in drawing inferences on women's participation and caste. (Swapna Mukhopadhyay,

Though the institution of caste has undergone considerable change in its attitude to female work participation, still its influence has not totally waned away. In the rainfed paddy growing regions of West Bengal, Orissa and Bihar, sex-biased and caste-linked social barriers restrict the deployment of female labour to a greater degree than in most other regions (A. Chen Martha, . Not only caste status varies inversely with participation in manual labour

(M.N. Sreenivas, 1976) but also even among the poorest families socio-cultural factors do effect female work participation rates. Even within a class such as landless labourers, caste-based differences manifest in terms of segmentation of labour-markets as it is the 'style of life' and not the 'occupation' that is decisive in preferring gainful pursuits and rejecting others (Weber, 1958). Caste-based differences like reluctance of those belonging to agricultural castes to pursue jobs traditionally carried only by their social inferiors is a pointer to the persistence of this phenomenon. Similarly, the reluctance to accept the tasks usually performed by the landless by those who enjoyed ownership status in the past support the Weberian thesis. These caste differences do influence participation rates of women and thus lead to segmentation in labour-market, even among the poor. Though it is true that change in women's economic conditions alone is not enough to transform them as observed by Simone De Beauvoir (1983), still such change is vital to accelerate the process of transformation in the social and cultural aspects.

In view of the growing concern to the role of women in relation to economic development (G. Hanumantha Rao, 1977) interrelationship between caste and women's participation in labour force, caste and economic invisibility becomes much more relevant to evolve appropriate strategies and to bring in women of diverse caste groups within the fold of development. This article is a modest attempt in this direction.

The Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine whether labour participation rates among landless poor vary with caste, and
2. To examine the nature of segmentation, if any, in the women's labour-markets among landless households because of caste.

Area and Method of Study

Pedagottipadu, a village located in the cotton belt of Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh has been chosen for the

purpose, due to the multi-caste character of landless labour households and the investigator's familiarity with the area (See Appendix for details on study area).

In all, 45 landless labour households at the rate of 15 from each of the three caste groups, namely, Kamma, Telaga and Scheduled Castes were selected purposively. Women-headed households were excluded to make comparisons meaningful.

From these households, data on the size and composition of the family, usual status of members, nature of assets and their value were collected through a structured pre-coded questionnaire administered to the women respondents. To study the nature of labour-market segmentations, time disposition of each of the adult women workers in all sample families was noted for a period of one week. Time disposition was noted for each individual by nature of activity. Children who are occasional workers were excluded for this purpose.

This article is divided into two parts — Part-I deals with caste and women's participation in work and Part-II deals with caste and labour-market segmentation

PART-I

Caste and Women's Participation in Work

Though all the sample households belong to landless labour, their entry into hired labour-market and attitudes towards work are likely to be influenced by their past economic background and caste status (Kalpana Bardhan, 1985). The position of Kamma and Telaga households as landless labourers is comparatively recent phenomenon arising out of hereditary division of limited property, losing land gradually due to economic and social compulsions. On the other hand, Scheduled Castes as a group are known to be landless for a long time.

All the sample households are landless. However, the nature of other assets influences the time allocation for different tasks, as well as the opportunities for self-employment. They also condition one's opportunities for hiring out. For this reason other assets are also considered.

House is the major asset possessed by majority of the households. It accounted for nearly three-fourths of the value of total assets except in the case of Kamma, where it formed only 63 per cent. Only three Kamma, two Telaga and one Scheduled Caste households in the sample do not own any house of their own. The average value of the assets of the Kammas (Rs 6,333) is nearly double than that of the other two groups (Rs 3,646 and 3,250 among the Telaga and the Scheduled Caste respectively). This is partly due to the differences in size of the house and its type.

Next to house, cattle (buffaloes and calves) are owned by around 20, 25 and 13 per cent of the Kamma, Telaga and Scheduled Caste households respectively.

Household durables like cots, utensils, etc. are the other type of assets held by the sample households. The average value of these assets among the Kammas is double to that of Scheduled Caste while those of the Telaga stand in between the two.

Differences in the value of the house and marginal differences in other assets among the sample households had no effect on their participation in the labour-market. Caste and work participation rates are examined with reference to size of the family, schooling and age of entry into labour force.

Size of the Family

Size of the family can influence work participation rates of women. A small family facilitates women's participation in labour force, because of the limited burdens on child care and domestic work. On the other hand, a large family may limit women's opportunities for entering into hired labour-market because of compulsion of child care and cooking for a large family. Even in big families, women may enter the labour-market out of compulsions to earn; in such cases children, particularly the girls, share these burdens. The average size of the family and work participation rates of adult women workers to total adult females and percentage of child workers by sex to total children in each category are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
SIZE OF FAMILY AND WORK PARTICIPATION RATES OF
WOMEN AND CHILDREN BY 'USUAL STATUS'

Caste Group	Average Size of the Family	Percentage of Women Worker to Adult Women	Percentage of Child Workers	
			Boys	Girls
Kamma	3.4	94.11	0.0	33.3
Telaga	4.2	85.0	5.8	60.0
Scheduled Caste	5.7	89.5	52.4	31.6

The average size of the family was the lowest among Kamma and the highest among Scheduled Caste, while it stands in between the two among Telaga. Work participation rates of adult women are more or less the same among all the three groups.

This data clearly shows that family size does not seem to influence work participation among the poor. However, in the case of child workers, given the age composition, girls' participation rates are higher than those of boys. Between castes, the percentage of girls in labour force is rather low among Kamma while it is around 60 per cent in the case of Telaga. The low percentage of participation of Scheduled Caste girls in work compared to other two groups is because of the age distribution, that is, a high percentage of the girls are below six years. This shows that there are differences between castes in respect of entry of children into labour force. These differences may be due to schooling of children.

Schooling

Schooling influences the work participation rates among children. In this respect, there are differences between the castes. The percentage of girls attending school is comparatively high among the Kammas (67 per cent), while it is around 40 per cent among both Telaga and Scheduled Castes. This partly explains the differences in the work participation rates of children among the three caste groups, though all belong to the same class.

Age of Entry into Labour Force

Caste taboos prohibit girls going out for work, after they attain the age of puberty and before they are married. For this reason caste influences the age of entry of girl child into the labour force even in a given class. The percentage distribution of female workers including child workers by age of entry into hired labour-market is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALE WORKERS BY AGE OF ENTRY
INTO HIRED LABOUR-MARKET

Class Interval of Age	Kamma	Telaga	Scheduled Caste
6-10	6	10	26.8
11-15	23	20	56.5
16-20	35	70	16.7
21-25	6	-	-
26-30	12	-	-
31-35	12	-	-
36 and above	6	-	-
	100	100	100.0

Caste differences are highly visible in respect of women's age of entry into labour force. Around 83 per cent of women workers among Scheduled Caste are entering the labour force at a very early age of less than 15 years as against only 30 per cent among Kamma and Telaga. Almost all the female workers belonging to Scheduled Caste and Telaga enter the labour-market before the age of 20 years. However, only 64 per cent female workers of the Kamma enter the labour-market by that age. This is partly due to schooling and partly due to caste norms which prohibit unmarried girls entering into the labour-market. The late entry into labour-market by around 30 per cent of the women workers among the Kamma is due to their past economic status with a marginal land base which has vanished over time.

To sum up, caste is not a differentiating factor, when one considers work participation rates by 'usual status' of females. But it influences the entry of girls into labour-market via

relative preferences to schooling and taboos restricting grown up unmarried girls going out for wages. Caste-based differences are quite marked with regard to age of entry into labour-markets. Majority of Scheduled Caste women and girls enter the labour-market at an age when they ought to be in schools; the percentage of those entering the labour-market at such an early age is rather low among other caste groups particularly the Kamma.

PART-II

Caste and Segmentation in Labour-Markets

Market segmentation based on caste differences does not manifest itself in peak agricultural seasons since farm work is pursued by all the landless poor irrespective of their caste. It manifests in slack periods when farm work for wages shrinks and particularly when there is no work at all on farms. Market segmentation comes into force in the slack season due to caste-based differences in production opportunities for self-employment, relative preferences or prejudices for available avenues of self-employment or wage employment and access to wage employment in the non-agricultural sector. To capture these aspects time disposition studies are considered appropriate.

This is being examined with reference to (i) nature of participation of women in labour force in the slack period; (ii) self-employment *vis-a-vis* wage employment and, (iii) participation in work outside the village and participation in work in the organized non-agricultural sector. Data on all these aspects are presented in Table 3.

Workers engaged in self-employment and wage employment alone are considered to study work participation during slack periods. The data shows wide variations in the percentage of women engaged in gainful employment among the three caste groups. Only one-third of the Kamma are engaged in gainful employment, as against 65 per cent among Telaga and 78 per cent of the Scheduled Caste women. The low percentage of work participation among Kamma compared to their counterparts in other castes, is largely attributable to their reluctance to engage themselves

TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN BY NATURE OF WORK PARTICIPATION AND TIME DISPOSITION

Sl. No.	Nature of Work No. personhours	Kamma			Telaga			Scheduled Caste	
		No. of persons	No. of hours	No. of persons	No. of hours	No. of hours	No. of hours	No.of persons	No.of hours
1.	Self-employment								
	(i) Dairying	-	0.46	-	-	-	-	-	-
	(ii) Other productive work	3	0.66	1	0.10	-	-	-	-
	(iii) Free collective of cotton	-	-	-	-	12	2.60		
	Sub-total	3	1.12 (7.46)	1	0.10 (0.57)	12	2.60 (17.10)		
2.	Wage-employment								
	(i) Cutting cotton plants	-	-	-	-	2	0.59		
	(ii) Earth work	-	-	2	0.40	-	-		
	Sub-total	-	-	2	0.40 (2.21)	2	0.59 (3.88)		
3.	Wage-employment Outside The Village								
	(i) Employment in tobacco barn work	-	-	-	-	4	0.50 (3.29)		
	(ii) Employment in non-agriculture:								
	(i) Tobacco grading	2	1.0	1	0.46	-	-		
	(ii) Work in cotton processing units	-	-	9	5.33	-	-		
	Sub-total	2	1.0 (6.66)	10	5.79 (32.04)	-	-		

4. Domestic Work And Other Activities

(i) Domestic work	-	8.8	-	8.23	-	7.97
(ii) Leisure	-	2.41	-	2.94	-	2.18
(iii) Child care	12	1.13	7	0.61	5	0.75
(iv) Social functions	-	0.53	-	-	-	0.57
(v) Religious activity	-	0.01	-	-	-	0.04
Sub-total	12	12.88	7	11.78	5	11.51
		(85.87)		(65.20)		(75.72)
Average number of work-hours per day	15.00		18.07		15.20	

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages to the total.

in the tasks pursued by other caste women. Further, between Telaga and Scheduled Caste, there are differences in the nature of work attributable to the caste factor which will be clear, when other aspects are considered.

Self-Employment vis-a-vis Wage Employment

The opportunities for self-employment for the poor who do not possess any productive assets will be limited. Only around 7 per cent of the Kamma and 17 per cent of the Scheduled Caste are engaged in self-employment. Self-employment is rather limited among Telaga, majority of whom are employed in non-agricultural sector. When one looks at the nature of the self-employment, differences between Scheduled Caste and others are clearly seen. These differences are largely due to caste. The total absence of dairy activity among Scheduled Caste is largely due to absence of such tradition in the past¹ partly due to 'social exclusion' and lack of such assets.

Other productive works like preparation of sweets for sale offer limited scope in the villages and Scheduled Caste are not used to these activities. On the other hand, free collection of cotton from cotton fallows and cleaning the product, is the major source of self-employment for Scheduled Caste. None among the other caste groups participated in such work. This clearly reflects caste inhibition preventing caste Hindus to take to such work, since it is not their caste tradition. Thus, caste is a factor influencing the nature of self-employment even among the poor.

Wage Employment Within the Village

Unemployment is an acute problem in the village in the slack season. Even if work is available, such work is more strenuous and is largely performed by those in the lower rungs of the social hierarchy. Earth work is an example. Among the sample households, none of the Kamma partici-

1. Scheduled Caste by tradition are habituated to rearing calves, which they generally get from their farmer patrons, free of cost or for a nominal price, or in exchange of service and sell the same often to the same patron in lieu of a loan taken or for a higher price after rearing them for some period. These opportunities have declined due to commercialization and also due to the growing practice among farming communities to purchase milk products, instead of maintaining milk cattle.

pated in the earth work. The upper caste's reluctance to participate in the work which is mostly done by their social inferiors reflects upon the caste-based inhibition even among the poor.

Wage Employment Outside the Village

This type of employment in the slack period relates to grading of tobacco and work in cotton ginning units. Such work within the village is preferred not only by the poor but even by the middle class. But such avenues could be captured by those with contacts outside the village.

Among the sample households, a high percentage of Telaga who are habituated to farm work outside the village had the advantage of securing employment in the cotton mills in the neighbouring villages. Scheduled Caste households go out for farm work only when such work is not available in the village because of their obligation to work for their landlords² to whom they look forward for financial help in times of need. These considerations are also partly responsible for their failure to capture emerging jobs in the cotton units and their relative preference for grading as it does not conflict with their employment in peak agricultural operations. Their low participation in wage employment in non-agricultural sector is due to the non-commencement of tobacco grading in the neighbouring villages. On the other hand, low participation of Kamina in cotton mills is due to the nature of work which involves night shifts, which is not to their taste partly due to caste norms.

During the survey period, only a limited number of Scheduled Caste households reported employment in tobacco barn work in the neighbouring villages while none among the Telaga and Kamina reported such work. This is due to the fact that it involves work during nights and could be undertaken only as a group work. Further, such work is done mostly by Scheduled Caste households and other castes under study do not prefer this work since they neither have the skills nor the aptitude and also because of the less

2. Labour households who seek financial help are obliged to the landlords, to supply labour in periods of scarcity of labour. As such they remain busy within the village during the peak season. However, they are not tied down to any single farmer as in the past.

prestigious character of this work. Thus, caste factor is operating even in the wage employment.

As a result of the above differentiation, differences in time disposition in domestic and related tasks between castes are visible. Kamma households have spent 86 per cent of their average workday in domestic and related tasks while Scheduled Caste households and more particularly Telaga have spent a low percentage of working hours in these tasks. The comparatively lengthy workday for the Telaga is due to the night shift by those engaged in the cotton mills.

Reasons for Non-Participation in Work Outside the Village and in the Slack Season

To further confirm whether caste is a factor inhibiting participation in work outside the village and within the village during slack season, those not engaged in wage employment during the survey period were asked to indicate the reasons for non-participation. The data is given in Table 4.

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS BY REASONS FOR NON-PARTICIPATION IN WORK OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE AND IN SLACK SEASON

	Kamma	Telaga	Scheduled Caste
Number of persons going to work outside the village	2	11	6
Reasons for not working outside the village			
(I) Caste custom	4	-	-
(II) Family status	6	-	-
(III) Illness	2	1	-
(IV) Family responsibilities	3	3	4
(V) Old age	-	1	3
(VI) Work is available in the village	-	4	3
(VII) Not used to work outside the village	-	-	1
(VIII) Waiting for work in the village	-		6
Reasons for not working during the slack season			
(I) Social status	4	-	-
(II) Work available is less prestigious	4	-	-
(III) Family responsibilities	1	3	1
(IV) Ill-health	3	3	1
(V) Waiting for work	-	1	3

A sizeable percentage among Kamma reported caste custom and family status as reasons for their reluctance to participate in work outside the village while caste status and less prestigious nature of the work available in the slack season as reasons for non-participation in the slack season.

Conclusion

The major objective of this study is to highlight the role of caste in influencing work participation of women of probe strata. The results of the study are mostly exploratory in nature. However, they clearly reflect that even though caste is not a factor influencing participation of adult women in the labour-market, its influence is visible in the work participation of girls and the age of entry of women into the labour force.

Labour-market segmentation based on caste is sharply seen in the slack season. The study shows that a high degree of segmentation noticed in the nature of self-employment pursued is due to caste differences. The influence of caste is also noted even in the wage market. In view of the limited empirical evidence on the role of caste in influencing the various aspects of work, further work in the area with conceptual refinements is needed to draw valid inferences on these issues.

APPENDIX

Note on the Village

The population of the village as per census was 5,780 of which 34 per cent were landless. Cotton is the major crop, which accounted for 92 per cent of the total cropped area during the Kharif season . The village had fairly developed infrastructure in terms of transport, telecommunication facilities, electricity and public water supply and schooling facilities.

The village has been electrified 33 years back and it has bus facilities since the past 20 years, and telecommunication facilities since past 25 years. Public water supply has been introduced during the past 13 years. The village has 15 provision shops and two medical shops. Though there is no public health centre, it is being served by five self-trained allopathic practitioners. Of the six primary schools, three are catering to the needs of Hindus, one for Muslims, one for Christians and one for Scheduled Caste. The village is also served by a high school for the last 27 years. Though public water supply to the residential houses has been in force for the past 13 years, public taps are available only in the Harijanawada (Scheduled Caste area). Existence of one poultry farm is an additional feature of the village. Two cotton ginning units have come up in the village. Caste-wise Kamma, Scheduled Caste, and Telaga households are numerically dominant and political dominance rests with Kainma, who are also numerically dominant as a single caste group. In addition to these, there are different types of service castes, Brahmins and Vaisyas.

WOMEN WORKERS MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

A Study of Seasonal Migration in Andhra Villages

T.A. Hemia Kumari
and
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One of the wrong notions held about the woman is that her role is centred round domestic and conjugal functions while the man is the breadwinner. But one estimate shows that on a worldwide basis women contribute 44 per cent of the food supply; 70 per cent of the agricultural production is in the hands of women, in USA, 50 per cent of women constitute the labour force and in the erstwhile USSR also the women account for half of the labour force (Blumberg, The changes in definition of 'economic activity' non-recognition of home-based women producers as workers (Singh and Viitanen, and certain methodological problems and biases in investigations are some of the factors which have resulted in under-reporting of women work participation and non-recognition of their contribution to household economy according to several scholars (Dandekar, Pushpa Sundar, . . . ; Stan D'Souza, . . . ICSSR, Bardhan, . . . ; Elemendorf, . . . and several others) In recent years studies have been conducted to examine the patterns of women work participation and their contribution to the survival and development of the households in rural and urban areas. The objective of this article is to add a little more to the existing knowledge on these aspects by way of discussion of (i) gender migration and occupational patterns, (ii) gender and income patterns, and (iii) contribution of income of women and its consequences to the rural households. The data, were collected for a study on women migration in rural Andhra.

One of the important cash crops in India is FCV tobacco and the State of Andhra Pradesh is the major producer—

accounting for around 90 per cent of the total production. No wonder that most of the tobacco grading and redrying factories are located in the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, where tobacco is grown on a large scale. The tobacco leaves are cured in the barns and are graded into seven categories on the basis of the shade and quality of the tobacco leaves and are bundled accordingly and sold to the tobacco buyers (representatives of the companies) by the farmers. Thus, tobacco grading is performed in the farm situation where usually the local female labourers are engaged. It is a very important operation because upgraded or badly graded tobacco will not fetch reasonable prices for the farmer. The graded tobacco is once again graded at the factories by their female graders. The grading operation in the organized sector which lasts for four to five months a year generates a lot of labour movement, mostly of females from one place to another in Andhra Pradesh. Rao (1978) estimated that the 78 tobacco grading factories, located in coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, in 1978 employed about 1,00,000 female graders and other employees for a period of three to five months, that is, from February to June every year. The graders include locals, commuters and migrants.

There were three FCV tobacco grading factories in Kovvur town of West Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh. Among them two grading factories were covered by the study. They were owned and run by Bharat Tobacco Company (BTC) and Andhra Tobacco Company (ATC). The former was established in the year 1938 and latter in the year 1976. In the year 1939 out of the total workforce of 3,000, there were about 2,600 female workers and 400 male workers in the BTC. However, in 1979 it had a workforce of 900 excluding the office staff. Among them 600 were females (all were graders) and 300 were males. Among the 600 females 199 (33.0 per cent) were migrants and the remaining were either natives of Kovvur or commuters from the neighbouring villages.

ATC factory had a total workforce of 563 in the year 1979 out of which 441 were females. Of them 75 (17 per cent) were migrants. But in the year of its establishment that is, in 1975 there were 617 females and 15 males and thus there was decrease in the proportion of women workforce both in ATC and BTC over the years.

Of the 199 migrants in BTC factory, three respondents

did not cooperate. So analysis was made for 196 migrants. There were 75 migrants in ATC factory and analysis was made for all the migrants and also for 271 respondents wherever it was necessary.

The migrant graders belonged to 16 caste groups and one group of Muslims. The 16 caste groups were divided into three categories, namely, intermediate castes, lower castes and Scheduled Castes (which included both Hindus and Christians). Table 1 shows, while Christians were more (54 per cent) among BTC graders, followed by Hindus (45.5 per cent) and Muslims (0.5 per cent), among ATC graders Hindus were a majority (81.4 per cent), followed by Christians (17.3 per cent) and Muslims (1.3 per cent). The intermediate castes accounted for 10.7 per cent and 22.7 per cent; the lower castes accounted for 3.6 per cent and 21.3 per cent, and the Scheduled Castes constituted 85.2 per cent and 54.7 per cent among the total BTC and ATC migrants respectively. The relative preponderance of intermediate and lower caste migrants in ATC factory when compared to BTC factory suggests the trend of proletarianization of these castes.

TABLE I
CASTE COMPOSITION OF BTC AND ATC
MIGRANT GRADERS

SI No	Name of the caste	BTC		ACT	
		Number of migrants	Proportion to total migrants	Number of migrants	Proportion to total migrants
1.	Intermediate	21	10.7	17	22.7
2	Lower	7	3.6	16	21.3
3	Scheduled Caste Christians	61	31.1	28	37.8
4.	Scheduled Caste Hindus	106	54.1	13	17.3
5.	Total of Scheduled Castes	167	85.2	41	54.7
6.	Muslims	1	0.5	1	1.3
Total:		196	100.0	75	100.0

The age of 60 per cent of the total 271 graders was 41 years and above, about 32 per cent were between 21 to 40 years and the rest were less than 20 years of age. However, among BTC graders there were more women in the older age group when compared to ATC graders. While 73 per cent were married, 10 per cent were divorced and 16.2 per cent were widowed. Unmarried were negligible. But among intermediate castes more than half were either widows or divorcees. The literates were 37 per cent which is considerably higher than the rate of literacy for women at the national level.

Those who would migrate alone, without being accompanied by any one of their relatives constituted 56.5 per cent. Those who would migrate with their husbands were 24.5 per cent, and those who would move along with other relatives were 19.1 per cent. These data show that all women migration need not necessarily be 'associational' as demographers would have us believe and even in associational migration availability of employment for women is critical consideration. Another important aspect of migration of graders is that more than half of them did not flinch from migrating and working even during the advanced stage of their pregnancy and only about 18 per cent stayed back in their village in similar condition. This question was not applicable for 30 per cent of the migrants either because they were widowed/divorced since they joined the factory or were unmarried.

Some Characteristics of the Migrant Households at the Places of Origin

Of the total households at the places of origin three-fourths were nuclear and around two-thirds were small in size with four members each or even less. Around half of the households had no dependents or a dependency ratio of 0.5 or less and the remaining half had dependency ratio of 0.51 to 3. The households with a per capita annual income of Rs 780 constituted around 26 per cent and this was much less when compared to 41 per cent of poor households in rural Andhra Pradesh in 1978. While only about 17 per cent of the BTC migrant households were below poverty line nearly half of the ATC migrant households were similarly placed. The difference was due to higher earnings of BTC migrants when

compared to ATC migrants which will be discussed later. About one-third of the households were debt-free, the remaining were indebted to different degrees, but mostly, less than Rs 1,000. However, it is important to note that most of them borrow money during the lean season, and after their return from Kovvur at the end of the grading season they repay the loans from their savings.

Having discussed the characteristics of the migrants and their households, let us now examine the occupational patterns of men and women of the migrant households at the place of origin as well as at the place of destination, and the income patterns.

Occupational Patterns at the Places of Origin

In order to have a better understanding of the differences of occupational patterns of the migrant households, separate analysis is made for the following categories:

1. Occupational patterns of the migrant graders at the places of origin.
2. Occupational patterns of male and female workers at the places of origin.
3. Occupational patterns of male and female workers at destination.

The economic activities are classified into 10 categories. They are as follows:

1. Cultivators (those who performed and/or supervised the agricultural operations of their own or leased land).
2. Agricultural labourers (those who offered themselves for agricultural employment).
3. Attached labourers (those who worked for a farmer continuously for a period of at least one year on contractual basis).
4. Petty business (sellers of vegetables, rice, provisions, etc.)
5. White-collar jobs (teachers, clerks, etc.).
6. Blue-collar employees (tailors, mechanics, fitters, etc.).
7. Semi-skilled workers (packers, bale stickers in factories).

8. Salaried manual jobs (watchmen, workers in municipality, railways, etc).
9. Traditional occupations (this category consists of exclusive caste occupations).
10. Other jobs (rickshaw pullers, lime workers, etc).

Occupational Patterns of the Migrant graders at the places of Origin

Of the total migrant graders around 80 per cent were engaged in various categories of occupations and the remaining did not engage themselves in any gainful activity in their places of origin. Those who were not engaged in any gainful employment accounted for around 55 per cent among intermediate castes, around 30 per cent among lower castes. However, 15.6 per cent of Scheduled Caste migrants of BTC did not work; most of the Scheduled Caste migrant women who did not work in the place of origin were wives of white-collar or blue-collar employees or salaried manual workers. Some studies have pointed out to the trend of withdrawing women from work participation as the income or economic status of lower class/caste household goes up. Most of the graders (71.4 per cent) were agricultural labourers and a few (3.3 per cent) were cultivators and the other occupational categories are less significant.

Gender and Employment Patterns at the Places of Origin

The total number of workers of the 271 households were 614, of which 317 were males and 297 were females. But 52 out of 271 migrant graders did not work at their places of origin. Had this figure been added to the total number of female workers it would have been 349. It would, then mean that the migrant households consisted of more female workers than male workers. Table 2 shows the cultivators accounted for 7.6 per cent of males and 4.0 per cent of female workers and this category was significant only among females of intermediate castes of BTC households with around 30 per cent. The attached labourers accounted for 5.0 per cent among men and none among women. They were mostly among intermediate and Scheduled Castes.

There was only one attached labourer among lower castes. Lower proportion of attached labourers, which was in

TABLE 2
OCCUPATIONAL PATTERNS OF THE HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS OF
THE MIGRANT AT THE PLACE OF ORIGIN

Sl. No.	Caste/ No. of Households	Occupational Patterns										Total		
		Cultivation		Agricultural labourers		Attached labourers		Petty business		Blue- collars		Male	Female	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
1. Intermediate 21	4 (20.0)	5 (29.4)	5 (25.0)	11 (84.7)	4 (20.0)	-	-	2 (10.0)	1 (5.9)	-	-	20 (100.0)	17 (100.0)	
2. Lower 7	-	-	7 (63.6)	5 (100.0)	-	-	-	-	-	2 (18.2)	-	1 (100.0)	5 (100.0)	
3. Scheduled Castes 167	15 (7.4)	5 (2.5)	133 (85.8)	186 (91.6)	9 (4.5)	-	-	4 (2.0)	1 (0.5)	19 (9.4)	1 (0.5)	202 (100.1)	203 (100.1)	
4. Muslims 1	-	1 (100.0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (50.0)	-	-	2 (100.0)	1 (100.0)	
5. Total of BTC 196	19 (8.1)	11 (4.9)	146 (62.1)	202 (89.4)	13 (5.5)	-	-	6 (2.6)	2 (0.9)	22 (9.4)	1 (0.4)	235 (100.1*)	226 (100.0)	
6. Intermediate 17	3 (20.0*)	-	9 (60.0)	10 (90.9)	1 (6.7)	-	-	1 (6.7)	-	-	-	15 (100.1)	11 (100.0)	
7. Lower 16	1 (6.2)	1 (9.1)	7 (43.8)	8 (72.7)	1 (6.2)	-	-	1 (6.2)	1 (9.1)	1 (6.2)	-	16 (99.8)	11 (100.0)	
8. Scheduled Castes 41	1 (2.0)	-	46 (92.0)	48 (100.0)	1 (2.0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	50 (100.0)	48 (100.0)	
9. Muslim 1	-	-	1 (100.0)	1 (100.0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (100.0*)	1 (100.0)	
10. Total of ATC 75	5 (6.1)	1 (1.4)	63 (76.8)	67 (94.4)	3 (3.7)	-	-	2 (2.4)	1 (1.4)	1 (1.2)	-	82 (99.9)	71 (100.0)	
11. Grand total of BTC and ATC	24 (7.6)	12 (4.0)	209 (85.9)	269 (90.6)	16 (6.0)	-	-	8 (2.5)	3 (1.0)	23 (7.3)	1 (6.3)	317 (100.0)	297 (99.8)	

Note: Figures in the parentheses are percentages.

the past an important source of livelihood for labourers and an important aspect of agrarian relations in general and *Jajmani* relations in particular, could be explained by two factors; (1) breakdown of *Jajmani* relations and (2) emergence of capitalist mode of production which encouraged wage employment in the place of semi-permanent employment with various kinds of obligations that would go with attached labour and some degree of bondage of the workers to the farmers.

Thus, on the whole all agricultural activities put together accounted for 87.0 per cent of the total earners which is an indicator of the obvious, that is, that agriculture is the major activity in rural Andhra. Among the other categories blue-collar employment was an important category with 7.3 per cent and others were less significant. The proportion of blue-collar workers was higher among lower castes than the others.

Among the total workers agricultural labourers accounted for 75.5 per cent. However, among the female workers as many as 90.6 per cent were agricultural labourers as against the figure of 65.9 per cent among men. Major disparity is found among intermediate castes in which only 43.0 per cent of the males and 75 per cent of the females were agricultural labourers. Of the remaining occupations white-collar jobs were significant among males.

Gender, Occupational Patterns and Incomes at Destination:

The 271 migrant households consisted of 55 men workers at destination, apart from the 271 women graders. Out of the 55 men, 45 (of those 44 were husbands of the graders and one was a son of a grader) were working for the grading factories as bale-packers, markers, etc. Two men (sons of a grader) were running a tea shop and the remaining eight men were working as agricultural labourers in Kovvur. They would migrate to Kovvur along with their wives and offer themselves for agricultural work. It may be pointed here that while women graders of BTC would get around Rs 60 per week the men workers would get Rs 65 per week. If the season was of five month duration, the BTC grader would earn around Rs 1,400 including bonus whereas the men workers would earn around Rs 1,500. But the men agricultural labourers and other workers at destination would earn

around Rs. 750 on an average. Since the wages of ATC factory workers were low and as there was no bonus the ATC graders would earn Rs. 750 during a five month season and the men would earn about Rs. 800-900 depending upon the quantum of work they did such as loading and unloading lorries for the factory.

Contribution of Migrant Graders to the Household Income—Income at the Place of Destination:

Data on marital status is shown in the Table No. 3. Among the total BTC and ATC migrants 73.5 per cent, 72 per cent respectively were unmarried, 8.7 per cent, 13.3 per cent respectively were divorced and 17.8 and 12 per cent were widowed. The proportions of income of the respondents at the place of destination to the total annual income of their households were classified into four categories with 25 per cent intervals.

**TABLE 3
MARITAL STATUS OF BTC AND ATC MIGRANT GRADERS**

Sl.No	Caste	Marital Status				
		Un-married	Married	Divorced	Widow-ed	Remarried
1. Intermediate	21	-	8 (38.1)	2 (9.5)	11 (52.4)	1 (4.8)
2. Lower	7	-	3 (42.9)	1 (14.2)	3 (42.9)	-
3. Scheduled Caste	167	-	132 (79.0)	14 (8.4)	21 (12.6)	35 (24.0)
4. Muslim		-	1 (100.0)	-	-	-
5. Total of BTC	196	-	144 (73.5)	17 (8.7)	35 (17.8)	36 (18.4)
6. Intermediate	17	-	9 (53.0)	4 (23.5)	4 (23.5)	
7. Lower	16	1 (6.2)	11 (68.8)	2 (12.5)	2 (12.5)	

(Continued on next page)

Table 3 Contd.

Sl.No	Caste	Marital Status				
		Un-married	Married	Divorced	Widowed	Remarried
8.	Scheduled Caste 41	1 (2.4)	33 (80.6)	4 (9.7)	3 (7.3)	2 (4.3)
9.	Muslim 1	-	1 (100.0)	-	-	-
10.	Total of ATC 75	2 (2.7)	54 (72.0)	10 (13.3)	9 (12.0)	2 (2.7)
11.	Grand Total of BTC and ATC 271	2 (0.7)	198 (73.0)	27 (10.0)	44 (16.2)	38 (14.0)

Note: Figures in the parentheses are percentages

Table 4 shows the proportion of the grader's income at destination to their households. Out of the total respondents of BTC and ATC those whose incomes at destination accounted for 25 per cent or less to the total annual household incomes were 30.6 per cent and 57.4 per cent respectively of the migrants who were married; 5.9 per cent and 20 per cent respectively of the migrants who were divorced; 17.2 per cent and 11.1 per cent respectively of the migrants who were widowed. Thus those whose income at destination constituted only 15 per cent or less accounted for higher proportion among married migrants in general and those belonging to ATC in particular compared to the migrants who were either divorced or widowed.

Those whose total incomes at destination accounted for 26 to 50 per cent of the annual household income were 56.3 per cent and 38.9 per cent of the married migrants of BTC and ATC respectively; 29.4 per cent and 20 per cent of the divorced migrants of BTC and ATC respectively; 31.4 per cent and 44.5 per cent of the widowed migrants of BTC and ATC respectively.

Those whose total incomes at destination accounted for 51 to 75 per cent of the total annual household incomes were 12.4 per cent and 3.7 per cent of the married migrants of BTC and ATC respectively. 52.9 per cent and 50 per cent of the divorced migrants of BTC and ATC respectively; 31.4 per cent and 22.2 per cent of the widowed migrants of BTC and ATC respectively. Thus compared to married migrants, among

TABLE 4
PROPORTION OF THE BTC AND ATC MIGRANT GRADER'S INCOME AT DESTINATION TO TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME OF THEIR HOUSEHOLDS BY MARITAL STATUS OF THE GRADERS

Sl. No.	Proportion of Migration income of Respondent Class	MARRIED			WIDOWED			DIVORCED		
		25% or less	26% to 50%	51% and 75% above	25% or less	26% to 50%	76% and 75% above	25% or less	26% to 50%	51% and 75% above
1. Intermediate	1 (12.5)	3 (37.5)	3 (12.5)	1 (18.2)	2 (45.5)	5 (9.1)	1 (27.2)	3 (50.0)	1 (50.0)	1 (50.0)
2. Lower	1 (33.3)	1 (33.3)	-	-	1 (33.2)	-	2 (66.6)	-	-	1 (100.0)
3. Scheduled Castes	41 (31.0)	77 (58.4)	14 (10.6)	-	4 (19.0)	5 (23.8)	10 (47.7)	2 (9.5)	1 (7.1)	4 (28.6)
4. Muslim	1 (100.0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Total of BTC	44 (30.6)	81 (56.3)	18 (12.4)	1 (0.7)	6 (17.2)	11 (31.4)	7 (20.0)	1 (5.9)	1 (29.4)	9 (52.9)
6. Intermediate	3 (33.3)	5 (55.6)	1 (11.1)	-	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	-	2 (50.0)	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)
7. Lower	6 (54.5)	4 (36.4)	1 (9.1)	-	1 (50.0)	1 (50.0)	1 (50.0)	-	-	-
8. Scheduled Castes	22 (66.7)	11 (33.1)	-	-	2 (66.7)	1 (33.3)	-	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	2 (50.0)
9. Muslim	- (100.0)	1 (100.0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10. Total of ATC	31 (57.4)	21 (38.9)	2 (3.7)	-	1 (11.1)	4 (44.4)	2 (22.2)	2 (20.0)	2 (20.0)	5 (50.0)
11. Grand Total	75 (37.9)	102 (51.5)	20 (10.1)	1 (0.5)	7 (15.9)	15 (34.1)	13 (29.5)	9 (11.1)	7 (25.9)	14 (51.9)

N.B.: Percentages in the parentheses are calculated for the total in each category of marital status and the unmarried graders are left out from the analysis.

the widowed and divorced migrants of both factories those whose income were 51 to 75 per cent of total household income were very high.

Those whose total incomes at destination accounted for 76 per cent or more of the total annual household incomes, were 0.7 per cent and nil for the married migrants of BTC and ATC respectively; 11.8 per cent and 10 per cent of the divorced migrants of BTC and ATC respectively; 20 per cent and 22.2 per cent of the widowed migrants of BTC and ATC respectively.

Thus, on the whole the contribution of the income of the widowed and divorced migrants at destination to their households was very substantial, that is more than half of the annual income whereas a large majority of the married migrants' income at destination accounted for 50 per cent or less to total household income. However it should be noted that more than half of the annual income of the households was contributed by single female migrant's income of a season's work of five months in the case of nearly 25 per cent of BTC migrant households and 16 per cent of ATC migrant households. Around 50 per cent of BTC migrants and 36 per cent of ATC migrants contributed 26 to 50 per cent of the annual household income by way of migration income.

When compared to the households of the non-migrants belonging to lower and Scheduled Castes in the place of origin, the contribution of the female workers among the migrant households and the overall income levels of the migrant households were generally found to be higher. The beedi workers of Allahabad contributed about 45 per cent of the family income (Bhatty 1987). Mencher and Saradamon (1982) demonstrated that the income provided by women, belonging to landless and marginal-landholding groups, to their households was found to be a substantial amount and without female income these households might not be able to survive at all. Mencher (1987) in her study in two regions of South India stated that women contributed 90 per cent of their earnings towards household expenditure while their husbands rarely gave over 60-75 per cent of their earnings and sometimes even less. However, the income levels of a few non-migrant households which had persons engaged in factory employment, or in other types of organized activities

were more, compared to seasonal-migrant households of our study.

Comparison between the earning of the migrant graders and husbands:

Out of the 198 married graders, 48.5 per cent earned more than what their husbands did and 51 per cent were the sole breadwinners of their households.

Out of the 144 BTC respondents who were married, a little over 50 per cent earned more than what their husbands earned. Mira Savara (1982) found similar pattern in the case of female textile workers who earned more than their husbands did because the latter were employed in the unorganized sector. Of the 54 ATC respondents who were married 42.6 per cent earned more than their husbands. When all groups are taken into account the sole breadwinners account for 19 per cent and 20 per cent respectively among BTC and ATC migrant households. Women's Research Centre (1984) found that in one of the mills of cotton textile industry in Calcutta most women are the breadwinners for their families. They spend nothing exclusively on themselves. Except one, all the women are migrants and most of them belong to Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh.

If major economic contribution was the basis for household headship, then 56 per cent of BTC migrant households and 44 per cent of ATC migrant households should be considered to be headed by women. The basis of household headship is not based on economic factors alone but is also culturally based to a considerable extent. Out of the 196 BTC migrant households 64.8 per cent were headed by the husbands of the respondents, 34.2 were headed by the respondents themselves and only 1 per cent were headed by other relatives of the respondents. The corresponding figure for ATC migrant households were 69.3 per cent, 24 per cent and 6.7 per cent respectively.

Management of Domestic Economy:

The economic contribution of migrant graders to their households means greater role in the domestic economy which would give them greater say in the economic and non-economic decisions concerning the household, control over

members of the household and in some cases even household headship. In order to understand the role of migrant graders in the decision-making in the household, the respondents (who were married) were asked about their participation in economic decisions, such as buying gold, land, cattle, dresses, utensils, etc. and other general decisions concerning the household such as children's education and work that is, to send or not to send the child to school, when to send the child to work, fixing marriages for the children, and so on.

With regard to economic decisions relating to matters mentioned above, 58.3 per cent of the BTC migrant graders and 22.2 per cent of the ATC graders stated that they would take the initiative as well as influence the final decision; 15.3 per cent of the BTC migrants and 31.5 per cent of the ATC migrants stated that their husbands would take all economic decisions and the remaining (26.4 per cent for BTC and 46.3 per cent for ATC migrants) stated that they would jointly take the decisions and it was difficult to say who would ultimately decide. Though among BTC and ATC migrants the role of females in decision-making was significant, less proportion of ATC migrants compared to BTC migrants would independently influence the economic decisions, perhaps, due to their younger age and lower contribution to the household income.

With regard to general decision-making around one-third each of the BTC and ATC migrants claimed control over decisions, around one-third each stated that their husbands had control and the remaining stated that the decision-making was joint involving both the respondent and her husband. It was mentioned earlier that either most of the widowed and divorced migrants were heads of their households and they were the decision-makers. Thus, majority of the migrant graders of our study were found to enjoy either equal authority along with their husbands or more authority than the husbands with regard to decision-making.

Impact of Mechanization and Managerial Practices on Women as Producers:

What has been described in the earlier pages pertained to the year 1979-81 and many of the tobacco graders have

been thrown out of their jobs due to closure of several grading factories. BTC was the biggest organization among the tobacco companies not only in Andhra Pradesh but also in the country. In 1951, the total work force of BTC was 300000 but the workforce has been reduced to 230000 in 1981. It was partly due to mechanization of the grading operations in the 1970s. After mechanization of stemming operations lot of female workers were retrenched by BTC. In the years 1984-85, the BTC closed down all of its grading factories and retrenched all the graders. However, the smaller factories have not closed their operations. The bigger companies purchase the tobacco from the farmers and get it graded by the smaller factories through contractors. As a result the bulk of the graders are now forced to join the smaller factories where wages are much lower and working conditions quite unsatisfactory. Thus women workers and their households have become victims of mechanization and anti-labour practices of the powerful business, with significant implications for the role of women in economy and process of development.

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TRIBAL WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENTAL MENTAL PROGRAMMES

A Perspective

P. Venkata Rao

Anthropologists evinced special interest in women from the beginning of the subject. The matriarchal debate which dominated the formulations of classical evolutionists revolved round the prominent role played by women in the early societies and men gradually taking over the dominant position. Bachofen, McLennan and Morgan suggested the existence of an original condition in which societies were controlled by women, in opposition to Henry Maine's argument that there existed a patriarchal despotism in the early stages of society.¹ Anthropology continued to pay attention to women through its various sub-fields. Economic anthropologists have thrown light on the sexual division of labour, women's role and contribution in economic activities and inheritance of property. Political anthropologists focused on the nature of primary inequalities based on sex and age and the nature of customary laws governing women. Position of women and the study of matrilineal societies have been an important aspect of kinship and family studies. Role played by women in socialization process and child rearing, part played by women in religion and its implications, etc, also formed important areas of study in anthropology. Though anthropology has been a holistic study and interested in women's role and other gender issues, there has been a realization in the recent decades that there existed an inherent male bias in the discipline and considerable gap in our understanding of women. Keesing (1976) pointed out that, though the communities studied by anthropologists equally comprise males and females, experience of women,

their lives, their perspectives on social events have rarely been adequately reported. Many women anthropologists like Benedict, Mead, Saligman and Dubois who carried considerable good work were said to be drawn into men's world. According to Keesing there is now more consciousness about interpreting from women's point of view also. Despite this, there have been studies bringing out the significant changes taking place in the conditions of native women under the impact of western attitudes and practices introduced by the European settlers.² Boserup's (1970) pioneering study showed the important role played by women in subsistence agriculture, and the negative effects colonialism and penetration of capitalism into subsistence economy had on women. Agrarian and industrial mechanization is said to have made women jobless and organized sector offered little scope for women with its labour-market oriented towards men. In a review of several studies pointing to these trends Naomi Quinn (1977) observed: "Everywhere under modernisation of traditional economics, opportunities for wage labour, higher paying jobs and training for skilled and supervisory position favoured men. Women are either relegated to the marginal labour or left behind in non-competitive shrinking traditional sector or at best channelised into women's professions." Adaptation of modern practices leading to more work for women, loss of traditional roles and importance and segregation from public domain leading to emotional strain were also reported by anthropological studies.³

With the emergence of feminist anthropology in the West, in India also there has been growing realization and consciousness about the male bias existing in anthropological

literature and the need to pay better attention to women and women's issues. Neelika Mehrotra (1990) reviewed the anthropological scene in India and pointed to the male bias existing in the ethnographic literature distorting the social reality. She indicated that the tribal women's roles as active and important participants in socio-economic life remained invisible and marginal. Prabha Mahale (1991) who made a strong plea for an Anthropology of Women, as the 'mainstream anthropology' considered women and women's issues as secondary. The male bias in anthropology has been attributed to: (i) Anthropology took shape as a formal discipline in the male-oriented Victorian era, (ii) Most anthropologists have been males and have had little access to women informants, and (iii) the focus being a product of male bias existing in the societies. It follows that there is a need to have a fresh look at the existing ethnographies and also to understand the ongoing changes focusing on women's issues and problems. To give one example, F.G. Bailey (1958) described in detail the changes taking place in Bisipara village as a result of economic forces set in motion by the British. Bailey's study throws little light on the role and economic contribution of women and how the changes affected them. The present article is an attempt to throw light on the changing conditions of tribal women in the wake of migration of non-tribals into the tribal areas and the introduction of tribal welfare measures.

Despite the fact that 'Women's subordination is universal in different degrees and different forms' (Keesing, 1976), anthropologists have suggested that women have not faced much discrimination (Evans Pritchard, 1965). In the Indian context it has been pointed out by Elwin (1960), "in most tribal societies woman holds a high and honourable place. She goes proudly free about the countryside. In field and forest she works in the happy companionship with her husband. She has the right to divorce and remarriage. The lamentable restrictions of widowhood do not await her" Women's contribution in tribal economy has been emphasized by several authors.

In India, enormous changes have been noticed among tribal women in the field of work due to contact with non-tribal cultures, changes in the subsistence pattern, and impact of agricultural technology and industrialization. The

tribal social system has been affected by the entry of non-tribals into tribal areas. Imitation of Hindu customs and practices and exploitation by unscrupulous elements have led to various social evils. Women are drawn into factories, mining and construction labour and are sexually and economically exploited. The influx of non-tribals has led to deforestation and land alienation resulting in growing proletarization of tribal women, rendering them subject to discrimination, wage exploitation, bonded labour and even flesh trade (Sachchidananda, 1988; Joshi, 1977; Murali Manohar Rao and Janardhana Rao, 1988).

In the Visakhapatnam agency where the author worked, tribal women are found to be active partners in all economic activities and have significant contribution to make. Women's work is always more than men as they have round the year work, unlike men who enjoy seasonal and periodical leisure. Unlike in the non-tribal society where women attend to housekeeping, child rearing and cooking, tribal women attend to all production activities (Prasada Rao, 1976). Women's work is a must for a cultivator. The tribals in Visakhapatnam agency have no marked preference for boys. They say a boy is necessary to perpetuate one's lineage while a girl helps another lineage to be perpetuated. A boy will help father while a girl helps mother. In spite of all these, like everywhere else, sexual division of labour has certain built-in advantages in favour of men. Certain important tasks like working on the roofs of houses, ploughing the agricultural fields, manufacture of implements meant for agriculture hunting and music are not done by women. Women can break topsoil with a spade for *podu* cultivation but they cannot plough in settled cultivation.⁴

The tribal areas of Visakhapatnam agency remained insulated from the rest of the areas with the hill ranges of Eastern Ghats acting as a natural barrier. The opening of the area initially through trade and transport, later the entry of forest and other governmental departments brought significant changes in the area. The expansion of commercial

activities and wage labour reduced the importance of women as the non-tribals preferred to deal more with males. The tribal women being suspicious, shy and having communication problem remained secondary in taking advantage of employment opportunities. In pockets where tribal languages are spoken, men are bilingual, speaking Telugu also, whereas women speak mostly tribal language only. It has been observed that employment opportunities available in soil conservation activities, National Malaria Eradication Programme, Forest Department, Public Works Department, Coffee Plantations, Girijan Cooperative Corporation and other developmental agencies are mostly made use of by men. A study conducted in the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh points out to this trend in other areas of the state also. It is observed that women are engaged in less number of occupations than men. Areas like non-agricultural labour, business, salaried jobs are dominated by males. Females are confined to agricultural labour, forest labour, minor forest product and firewood collection.⁵

One of the important developments as a consequence of economic changes is the increase in the amount paid as bride price locally termed as *oli*. It is natural that monetization and commercialization lead to more demand for cash and increased rates of bride price. But interestingly, instances of dowry are also slowly being mentioned especially in the case of educated and urban employed males. Anthropologists have associated bride price with typical egalitarian lineage based societies where property is collectively held by the members of the corporate descent group. Dowry is associated with individual property, process of social stratification and social mobility. Dowry also attributed to decline of women's earning power, withdrawal of women from outdoor work and as a means of transfer of women's share in property. A change in the women's work roles and economic polarization results in transition from bride price to dowry. (Jack Goody and Tambiah Srinivas, Cromaioff,

P.K. Mishra also pointed out an increase in the bride price and entry of dowry with growing education and

employment.

As a consequence of the entry of a number of external agencies, a large influx of non-tribals settled down in the agency area. This has further implications for women. Since, the non-tribal culture is considered as superior, attempts are being made to imitate their practices such as confining women in the house; other native consequences include concubinage, prostitution and adultery. In a study conducted in the Central Indian Tribal belt it has been elaborated how under the impact of dominant Hindu culture the points of strength of tribal women are being eroded.⁶ Communal ownership of land and usufructuary right over resources formed the source of strength for women in the traditional setting as they favoured a better equality. Land settlement gave importance to men as owners of property. Increase in the area of cultivation and introduction of cash crops resulted in more work for women. With increased opportunities for trade and labour the men are found to be more mobile and by extensive travelling they are becoming more knowledgeable and worldly-wise than women, thereby acquiring superiority over them. In a study conducted in the tribal shanties of neighbouring Srikakulam District it has been observed that buying and selling activities by tribals are predominantly carried by men. Travel and communication problems are attributed to be main reasons of trouble inherent in the shanties.⁷ The various changes that took place have marginally benefited tribal women as they are confined to primary sector, that is, agriculture and allied activities. On the other hand, they face the negative consequences due to processes like deforestation. Important consequences being the spending of more time and energy in walking long distances for fuel and fodder. The tribals of Visakhapatnam agency have not been touched by industrialization and urbanization. But studies from other parts indicate large-scale discrimination and exploitation against tribal women especially among the displaced ones. The position of tribal women, in the wake of various changes taking place, deserves more consideration. As aptly pointed

out by K.S. Singh (1980), though the tribal women enjoy a relatively high status and role when compared to non-tribal counterparts, it should not induce complacency. There are several issues such as declining sex ratio, marginalization, pauperization, low literacy, health and nutritional problems, absence of uniform minimum wages with men, ruthless exposure to market forces and other exploitative elements which have to be taken care of.

In the post-independence period various governmental departments entered the tribal areas in a big way. Various programmes and schemes were launched in Visakhapatnam agency through institutions specially established for amelioration and development of tribal population. From the beginning of multi-purpose projects up to the present day Integrated Tribal Development Project, the emphasis has been on agriculture and allied areas. For economic development of the area, focus has been on agriculture, animal husbandry, small scale and cottage industries and provision for institutional credit.⁸ Various programmes and schemes taken up under these are mostly aimed towards men. Tribal women who constitute nearly half of the population, and who are partners to men, do not figure much as beneficiaries. In agriculture and dairying where women do most of the work, the trainings, demonstrations, educational tours, etc. are oriented towards men. Land is distributed to men and loans, inputs, etc. are given to them. Women are assumed to be associated with or assisting their menfolk who own the land and hold the decision-making power. Theoretically, it is possible for a woman to get institutional finance. But even a widow having children may go in for local credit if she is unable to fulfil the formalities.⁹ Since the developmental personnel are mostly men and are oriented towards men their interaction with women is minimal and women beneficiaries receive little attention. In this process women lag behind men in having access to information, technical knowledge related to improved methods and other services. "Segregation of sexes is too often carried over into the developmental organisation. Agriculture is regarded as a matter for men on which men instruct men. Women are

approached by women on subjects held to be the concern of women." This observation made by Lucy Mair has much relevance to the local situation.

Developmental personnel are not showing equal responsibility to women's progress as women's activities are expected to be taken care of by the Women Welfare Department. But this department receives very small allocations. In Andhra Pradesh these allotments are meant for spending on opening children homes, creches and girls' hostels, and for contribution towards share capital for Andhrite women's credit and finance corporation.¹⁰ Women's component of development is in the form of health, family welfare, nutrition, establishment of creches, children's homes and girls' hostels. Recently health and nutrition programmes received better attention after the starting of Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS). Economic activities for women followed a middle class model of development organizing some part-time and leisure time activities through Mahila Mandals and associations. Women are being provided with training and assistance to take up women's activities like sewing, Adda leaf plate making, typewriting and for acting as midwives. Under industries and training programmes, most of the new activities introduced, like carpentry, spinning and weaving, pottery, brick making, tile making, rice mills, oil presses, flour mills, assistance for trade and small business, etc. have mostly male beneficiaries only. Report of the Working Group on Development of Scheduled Tribes during Seventh Five Year Plan mentions that developmental efforts have not reached tribal women mainly on account of communication barriers, lack of rapport and absence of suitable agencies to carry the programme to the womenfolk. Similarly, rural women are being neglected in developmental programmes.

The tribal men and women work together, share burden, have common recreations like dancing. The developmental programmes are segregating sexes imposing upon them different spheres of work. Elwin Committee rightly questioned this, saying "it is really desirable that women's programmes should form a separate unit of the general scheme of community development". It also pointed that the

conventional schemes like Mahila Samaj have not met the requirements of tribal women. Panchayati Raj is another introduction into the tribal areas. Though certain positions are earmarked for women in these bodies, the participation of tribal women in these formal bodies is not up to the mark. Women members are not in a position to take advantage of these bodies. The traditional tribal councils allowed the freedom of expression to all and women had a sense of participation in these councils. With new opportunities coming up education became an important vehicle for mobility. But here also the disadvantaged position of women is evident from their enrolment figures. Non-enrolment of women is due to their indispensability in work sphere, and the urban middle class assumption that it is for men to get educated for pursuing jobs. The major problem of Scheduled Tribes is essentially that of economic development and integration of tribal economies with the larger society. The object of integration with the rest of the society is equalization of opportunities for development. The Integrated Tribal Development Policy aims to reduce the gap between tribals and non-tribals and to improve the quality of life of tribal communities. In the light of the observations made so far one may have to pay attention to the emerging gap between tribal males and females and the relative decline in the quality of life of tribal women.

Conclusion

The tribal women have been enjoying a relatively better position and working conditions. Contact with outsiders, monetization and commercialization of economic activities, introduction of government policies and development programmes have reduced the earlier importance of women. Various changes and new practices have added to their work without enhancing their position. The tribal women who were equal partners in economic pursuits have been relegated to the background in economic development. The ideas of segregation and discrimination inherent in non-tribal stereotypes and development models have penetrated into the tribal areas. Women's development is being treated as a separate issue. They have not been integrated into the development process and are being considered as a separate

ROLE OF WOMEN IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

**K. Raja Reddy
and
P. Adilaxmi**

Introduction

The role of urban women in economic activity is the recent trend. This is mainly due to the recent changes that are occurring in the society. Their role is mainly confined to domestic work and child rearing, whereas for rural women apart from their household work, they have to perform certain role in economic activity also. This is the age-old tradition. In some of the rural communities woman's status is mainly determined by her motherhood and her role in economic activity. Particularly if she is playing important role in economic activity and adding substantial income to her family, she will achieve a status that is equal to man and further she will have a voice in decision-making process in her family.

In this article the role of fisherwomen is briefly examined with reference to their position in the society by their designated rights and obligations. The status position is explained in terms of role. The women have to perform divergent roles as a mother, housewife, a career woman. These roles may not always be convergent. Nor do they need to have the same scale of priorities. In one case a woman may perceive her role as a housewife assuming priority in a role cluster, and in another, her career may assume priority. In the third instance a woman may struggle to give equal emphasis on both the roles.

In the process she bears the double burden of running a household and at the same time, pursuing a career. Since both status and roles are part of culture complex, this competition is intended to be as nearly as possible a representative mosaic.

The position of women in any society is a true index of its cultural and spiritual level. Men who are responsible for many of the views about women, have fantastic stories about the latter's instability and their inferiority to men as well as their mystery and sanctity. Many Indian women attained greatness in various spheres of life with the encouragement and good wishes of men in some cases and in spite of their discouragement in other cases.

General Information of Fishing Communities

Fishing is the occupation of quite a number of communities living near the sea or any other major water source. In India there are certain caste communities whose traditional occupation has been fishing. For generations they have made their living by exploiting the fishing resources, both marine and inland, living in well-knit communities, and have developed their own customs and traditions over the centuries, which are of immense interest to anthropologists.

India has a considerably long coastline of 5,650 km enclosing a continental shelf with an area of 414,868 sq km. India's rivers and irrigation canals originating from natural lakes and man-made reservoirs run to a length of over 140,000 km. Naturally the people living in their vicinity employ themselves in fishing operations. Fishing is the main and perhaps the only occupation of an estimated 5.38 million people of India (Centre for Science and Environment, 1985). The annual fish production of India is about 28.5 lakh tonnes.

Andhra Pradesh, lying in the southern peninsula, shares with other states about 974 km of the country's coastline, about 409 of its fishing villages are located along this coastline apart from the others situated along the banks of the rivers, around the lakes and backwaters.

The state has about 379 fish producing centres. There are about 72,862 fishing families in the state, with a population of 326,304, of which 83,903 are full-time fisher folk. In 1984, Andhra Pradesh produced an estimated 146,511 tonnes of fish values at Rs 14,513 lakh. The total production of prawns in the same year was 9,970 tonnes.

This article mainly deals with the Palli women who

perform a unique role especially in the economic sphere. It focuses on the roles assigned on the basis of sex, with particular emphasis on the fisherwomen's economic role. The study of fisherwomen's role, however, places emphasis upon sex roles in the context of a wide-ranging descriptive analysis of fishing community.

The Role of Fisherwomen in Domestic Work as well as in Outside Works

The domestic factors and outside works appear to have greater repercussions on the role of fisherwomen, but actually it is not so. Among Pallis a woman can perform any role in any field of institution. Fishing is not an exception to the responsibilities and domestic duties of fisherwomen. There is a perfect division of labour among men and women in addition to the domestic work which is culturally evaluated as equal or a little more to that of men. However, as individuals in general, women are evaluated as inferior to men.

Division of Labour

There is a broad division of labour among Pallis based on age and sex. The adults have heavy tasks and more responsibility for their works and children have only light tasks, working as helpers to adults. The duty assigned to men is the fishing.

Women are considered to be the important economic asset in Pallis. The tasks assigned to them are cooking, rearing children, work on land either on their own property or as hired workers. Women work from morning till evening without rest. Although women are considered a weaker sex than men, Pallis women do more work than men. From the days of their childhood they are put to hard work. Hence they do not find any change even when they grow up. There is a relation between social status of women and work in the fields. Those who have enough land, work less in the fields, even though they take part in economic activity by working only on their lands. Landless women work in the fields of others on hired basis. Older women take part in light tasks like helping their daughters-in-law in domestic work and

looking after their grandchildren. Some women can do midwifery. Women also help in the construction of huts.

Contribution of Women's Income

It has already been mentioned that women are major economic units, they are great helpers to their husbands in earning income from all sources. Pallis mainly depend on fishing followed by agriculture. All family members work on land in sowing and harvesting. The women are compelled to work at this economic level in order to save the cost of labour. During plantation season, all most all the women work in the fields as agricultural labour and earn Rs 15 per day. They add this income to family budget. Some Palli women sell small things like *beedies*, cigarettes, and biscuits, etc, and substantiate their family maintenance with their income.

The Role of Fisherwomen in Marketing

The Financier Fisherwomen

No other role in the fishermen community stands out for its typical characteristics as that of the marketable. Etymologically it means *marakamu*, in Telugu, which stands for exchange. But the role of *marakatthe* typifies a whole range of institutionalized economic relationships with a mixture of the banker's role and of the sharecropper in a peasant society. More significant, however, are the personality attributes which most *marakatthes* acquire in the process of socialization. They tend to be aggressive, energetic, bold and incredibly efficient.

A search for similar roles in anthropological literature is not entirely unrewarding. A review of the literature yields at least two such roles. At one time female fish retailers in Onitsha, Nigeria, etc, used to make credit advances to fishermen in the Northern regions who would bring their stock for their creditors. However, as Margaret Kattain reports, the tradition of predominance of female traders in most parts of Nigeria is being threatened. Ibo and Yoruba men appear to be taking over the fish trade, formerly controlled by women. Dorothy Hammond and Alta Jablow who did pioneering cross-cultural work on women suggest one

generalization. Women's control on wealth is restricted in most tribal and peasant societies. At best, their economic roles are limited to a behind the scene manipulation. Yet, they suggest, in a few tribal societies, strong-minded women with access to property may legitimately assert themselves, rejecting the normally subordinate and restricted role. They are, in fact, typical personalities who are accorded deference and envy. The important question to be considered is why these deviants are respected rather than merely tolerated or condemned for their failure to conform. Oscar Lewis, in his study of the Black Foot Tribe of the North Piegan, discovers a unique type of female personality known as the 'manly-hearted woman'. The Piegan culture puts a premium on masculinity and encourages male dominance. At the same time, women help in the functioning of the economic system both in the domestic household and as producers of wealth. They are also accorded a major role by the Black Foot religion. Lewis draws attention to the discrepancy between the important and religious role played by Piegan women and the established standards of female behaviour emphasizing on weakness and docility which require them to relegate themselves to the background of Piegan social life. In terms of the cultural norms the 'manly-hearted woman' is a deviant—a highly endowed woman who equals men in their own skills, in personal wealth, in sexual prowess and in religious participation.

Within the fishermen community under study, the role of *marakathes* as promoter of enterprise-cum retail trades is unique and perhaps unparalleled among women across various cultures. A *marakatthe* advances credit on small fishing boats (*theppa*) and nets. In absolute terms the amount advanced ranges from Rs 1,000 to Rs 10,000 on country crafts and Rs 80,000 to Rs 120,000 on machine boats. In Palli Palem there were only two instances of the latter category—one given to a kinsman of the same village and another to a neighbouring villager. The transaction entered into by the *marakatthe* with the loanee is quite complex but absolutely informal. There are neither written agreements nor witnesses to such transactions. Three aspects of the transaction stand out prominently. Firstly, the loanee's boat is mortgaged to the *marakatthe*. In the event of its disposal/sale the *marakatthe* retains the first rights over it.

Secondly, there is a sharecropping arrangement of the fish harvested. Under this, the *marakatthe* has first rights over the purchase of fish from the loanee at the price which is usually 8 to 12 per cent less than the prevailing market price at the landing point on the shore. The *marakatthe* or her nominee in case of unavoidable circumstances is understood to be present at the landing point as the fishing boats are towed in. The sharecropping arrangement lasts until the loan is cleared. The third aspect pertains to repayment of the loan. The loan has to be cleared in one instalment only when the loanee is able to pool up capital. There are no prefixed terms as to the terminal point of time for clearing the loan. As there is a sharecropping arrangement the loan does not carry any interest payments. One other aspect of the *marakatthe* system is that she is under an obligation to advance petty loans to her clients for consumption purposes wherever the fish catch is poor or the individuals fall into distress. Such advances usually are not added to the major loan, but often repaid at short intervals.

A successful *marakatthe* is constantly preoccupied with her economic transactions. She has to keep her eyes wide open all the time. She usually vocalizes her point of view. She keeps her lineage connections with the members of the caste Panchayat, who have to pass a verdict in the event of disputes with her clients. With her deft manipulation of property she builds up her productive assets and capital. A *marakatthe* is not considered a deviant in terms of the cultural norms of the fishermen community. On the contrary, her economic role in regard to sharecropping arrangements draws considerable social support from the fishermen community, especially the traditional caste Panchayat, yet, she remains an object of admiration as well as envy for the personality traits she displays and for the wealth she accumulates.

There are two types of *marakatthes* in the Palli society. Some *marakatthes* immediately sell fish to *berakatthes* at 8-12 per cent profit. These *marakatthes* do not ordinarily go to markets for retail fish trade. The second type of *marakatthes* buy fish from their clients and also sometimes from other fisherwomen. These *marakatthes* take fish to markets for retail fish trade.

Berakatthe, The Fish Trader

The word *berakatthe* is derived from the Telugu word *beramu*, denoting bargain and sale. *Berakatthe*, among the Pallis, therefore, refers to the women who bargain the purchase and sale of fish at two different points, first, at the share point where they purchase and second in the retail market where they sell.

By investing time and labour in processing and selling the fish in small quantities, Jalarri women are in a position to increase the household income. The time and energies of the housewife and other adult women in a Palli family are sought to be utilized for the economic uplift of the households, they supplement the family earnings and in a few cases, provide the only source of livelihood for the family.

The Table 1 indicates that a fisherwoman learns her economic skills mostly from her household.

TABLE 1
THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF BERAKATTHES SKILLS

Sl. No.	Skill Learnt From	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Total
1.	Mother	44	51.2
2.	Self	15	17.4
3.	Mother-in-law	8	9.3
4.	Mother's sister	8	9.3
5.	Others in the family (sister-in-law, father's sister)	4	4.7
6.	Neighbours	5	5.8
7.	Don't know/Can't recall	2	2.3
			100.0

Data presented in the Table show that a majority of the *berakatthes* learn trading in fish directly from their mothers, followed by other female relatives within the family (mother-in-law, mother's sister, sister, father's sister). The latter group accounts for nearly a quarter. About one-sixth of the

berakattches have picked up the trade entirely on their own. Neighbours constitute the source of skill learning for about 6 per cent of the *berakattches*. It turns out that the family is the most potent source of socialization into fish trade as one of the family members (mother, mother-in-law, mother's sister, sister, sister-in-law or father's sister) is the primary source for imparting the relevant skills for three-fourths of the *berakattches*.

As it is mentioned earlier women are playing a prominent role in marketing the fish. In general women with younger children are mostly confined to domestic work at house and women normally aged 40 years do this marketing business. As and when the fishes are not available due to unsavourable climates in the sea, these women go to agricultural fields to work as agricultural labourers.

Conclusion

This is the outcome of a study of the role of fisherwomen in fishing and marketing. In some ways the study is also a community study of Pallis, a mono-caste village of fishermen in Karedu village on the east coast of India. The study assumes significance in the context of the upsurge of interest in women's studies in recent years, both in the West and in Third World countries like India. Earlier studies by anthropologists have been criticized by the new generation of feminist scholars in the social sciences. The criticisms raise the issue that most anthropological studies have followed approaches and concepts that are gender-mensural and their methodologies were not sufficiently sensitive to understand and analyse the role of women.

The main objectives of the study of fisherwomen are to analyse the multiple roles of the fisherwoman as a member of the family, fish trader and promoter of enterprise and her status and importance in the social system. While the focus of the study is on the unique aspects of the fisherwomen's changing role the study seeks to analyse it in the overall context of the Palli culture.

Pallis as a caste, are primarily engaged in the occupation of fishing. The technology used by the fishermen of Palli is a primitive one. Among Pallis the household is the basic production unit as well as the basic consumption unit. The

man goes to the sea for fishing and takes care of his fishing equipment. The woman takes care of the children, supervises the sale of the fish harvested by the menfolk. It is also her obligation to see that her family is properly fed. To provide subsistence to the family many fisherwomen have taken to the role of *berakatthe* (fish-trading woman) — another important role played by women in the Palli society.

The role of marketing is a unique one in Indian peasant society. It typifies a whole range of institutionalized economic relationships, with a mixture of the role of banker and of the sharecropper in a peasant society. More significant are the personality attributes acquired in the process of socialization and marketing. Within the fishermen community under study the role of marketing as a promoter or enterprises-cum-retail trader is perhaps unparalleled among women across various cultures.

The roles of fisherwoman as the custodian of the family's cash and as the financial manager of the household have helped to reinforce her claim to keep the profit from fish sale to herself and to utilize it the way she likes. But the measure of economic independence, in practice, is limited because of the subsistence situation and the norms of consultation between the spouses.

Based on the scale of operations, the amount of capital invested, the technology used, the regularity of their business and the market in which they operate the *berakatthes* are classified into middle level *berakatthes* who share a number of the characteristics of the top *berakatthes*, but the size of their daily investments are lower, and their marketing skills are of a slightly lower order; the petty *berakatthes* who do not participate in business regularly, make small investments and use the available technology rather infrequently. They make small profits to supplement their family income and their domestic commitments take precedence over business considerations.

The street vendors form another category, whose scale of investments are comparable to that of the middle level *berakatthes*. However, their participation tends to be somewhat irregular, depending on the price levels and the weather. With an understanding in prefixed areas and routes they are assured of good profit margins.

Needless to emphasize that the demands which fish marketing makes upon the *berakatthe* in terms of energy, wit and resourcefulness are stupendous. They have to work long and hard in order to make sizable profit margins and build up capital.

In Palli community there are a number of social and economic mechanisms, practices and social norms. In this community, as in most other peasant communities of India there is a clear and self-understood division of labour. Sex-based economic roles are generally complementary. The arrangement is backed by social norms, and often based on considerations of efficiency. Since a Palli household is both the production and consumption unit, the division of labour between the sexes and activities inside and outside the house are enforced with great rigour. A fisherwoman cannot go for fishing nor does a fisherman attend to household work or market the fish or lend money for promoting fishing activity.

In this community the economic roles are shared equally by both men and women. Comparing their roles in their community men have only few responsibilities whereas for women apart from their usual activities like maintaining the household, socializing their children, etc, economic activity is also one of the important tasks. With these activities women acquired a special status in their community. However, while comparing with their counterparts of the other communities these Palli women are far behind in terms of education and awareness. Due to their ignorance, they are not able to utilize many developmental schemes and latest trends in marketing the fish. The only possible way to elevate their economic status is to educate these women by creating awareness in different developmental as well as welfare programmes.

Migration

A Gender Analysis

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and

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One of the first theoretical explanations of migration was offered by Ravenstein in the late 19th century in the form of 'laws of migration'. The basic premise of this theory was that migrants move from areas of low opportunity to areas of high opportunity and the choice is regulated by distance. In the later half of 20th century Lee introduced his push and pull hypothesis which dominated the mode of thinking in migration studies. It considers migration as an outcome of the interplay and balance of expulsive forces and of attractive forces in the places of origin and destination. Following this line of reasoning one can infer that the push-pull dimension is a subjective characteristic of migration. Whether the individual migrant thinks of himself as being pushed by the poorer job, health, educational, economic and other conditions in his rural habitat or is attracted by the better urban conditions depends in part on his evaluation and may well be different before and after the fact of migration (Sjoberg, 1951). Personal reasons and individual motivations will necessarily be important during the pioneering phases of a migratory movement. They are of little interest during the mass or social movement phases which is sustained by imitation and inertia (Mortar, 1951). Operationally studies on migration are usually based on temporal, locational and directional criteria. In sociological literature out-migration has been sometimes conceptualized as a relief to the strains and tensions associated with population growth (Moore, 1945). In the theory of changes and response in modern demographic history Davis (1951) suggested that population growth elicits multiple responses that include out-migration. While out-migration can be of various types rural-urban migration is one of the most problematic because of its impact on urbanization and related problems.

Most authors state that utility of place or availability of opportunities play a major role in deciding the directions of migration (Davis, 1951; Cox, 1972; Goshal, 1961). While some argue that it is not the pull factors or utility of the place but the push factors like lack of work and scarcity of agricultural land that cause out-migration from rural areas specially in a country like India (Sovani, 1966; Lipton, 1976; Connell, et al. 1976). Some others say that the push and pull factors vary with the type of society in which the migration takes place. For example, migration in traditional society is said to be largely forced and is a response to push factors. whereas in industrial societies it is largely voluntary response to pull factors (Emrys and John, 1977).

The Harris Todaro model in economics emphasizes the in-migration of the labour force with the expectation of finding a job and their contribution to the growth of squatter colonies at a theoretical level and takes into consideration only economic variables while neglecting the effect of temporal variations within a defined space.

Migration is chiefly in response to deep-seated inequalities and rigidities in the communities of origin. Some argue that rural emigration is a response to decades of public policy biased in both investment allocation and price manipulation against agriculture (Lipton, 1980).

As for unskilled workers their substantial random rural out-migration might perhaps help those who stay to raise wages. According to Lipton the promising self-advancing form of migration take place amongst bulk of villages (though often from villages of low average income per person).

There are several studies in India where the conventional view of rural-urban migration as the consequences of rural poverty has been questioned. Factors that are purely economic explain only 54 per cent of the variance in normalized migration from rural to urban areas in India (Greenwood, 1971). However, in spite of contradictions it can be deduced that population tends to migrate from low opportunity areas such as rural or underdeveloped areas to higher opportunity areas such as larger and well-developed cities or towns (Mehta, 1991). Hence, the magnitude of rural-urban migration can be said to be affected more as a result of the push factors because of limited opportunities of employment and

underemployment in rural agricultural sector.

In the slack agricultural season a large number of poor women move out of their villages to seek casual employment in irrigation projects, construction of roads, railroads and buildings and such other public works (Jain, 1979). Similarly rural women migrants are greater in number than men migrants in plantations in West Bengal and Assam.

Macro studies on migration depend upon the census data to understand the trends of migration. While census data is an important source, it fails to provide data on the personal circumstances of the migrant in detail. So compared to the census, focused surveys of the migrants have one central strength in that they provide a whole range of information on migrants. Hence, primary studies that explore the close linkages between the level of living and nature of employment and location as well as workplace are more desirable and welcome.

In other words, it must be understood that macro-level theorization is necessary only up to a point. If local problems have to be solved, specially in a vast and diverse country like India, solutions have to come from a scientific collection of local information and the formation of local level policies that suit the specific area and are also capable of dealing with local constraints.

Present Study

Mahbubnagar District in Andhra Pradesh is one of the most backward districts in the country and is severely drought prone. Successive droughts and the consequent lack of opportunities have pushed people in large number to other areas in search of employment for decades so much so they are called Palamur labour (erstwhile name of Mahbubnagar) and have earned a reputation of being hard working.

The data presented in this article was collected in 1991-92 as part of a larger project on migrant labour in Mahbubnagar District.

Sample and Methodology

Mahbubnagar District is divided into 64 Mandals.

Traditionally more people migrate from certain Mandals than the other for various reasons. Among these Wanaparthy and Bijenepally Mandals are believed to send larger number of people in search of work as gathered from the district administration. The data presented here pertain to Bijenepally and Wanaparthy Mandals. The sampling process ended with the selection of Mandals and the rest of the study was carried out as a census study. All the 14,360 households in 46 villages were visited and 2,610 migrant households were identified. The population for the study consisted of 5,746 individual migrants who come from 2,610 households, of these 3,310 are males and 2,436 females. However, migrants of other categories like those migrated due to employment, due to marriage, family mobility due to transfer and so on are excluded by design. In other words, the population for the survey consisted of labour who migrated in search of work from the villages in the selected Mandals.

Migration Flows

Most of the migration studies report that the largest proportion of the migrations are from rural to urban areas. This is more true in the case of labour because they are pushed out of the village due to lack of employment. Migrants of this study were asked to name the place of destination and the reported destinations were classified as rural and urban. Further, in order to find out about the shifts in flows, migrants were also asked to name their first place of destination, second place of destination if any and current place of destination. If the migrants give the name of an urban area as first place of destination and also current place of destination then it is deduced that no shift in migration flows have occurred. On the other hand, if two different places—one urban and one rural—are given then it is taken as a shift in migration flow and direction. The results are presented in Table I.

It can be observed from Table I that majority of the migrants (94.5 per cent) are migrating from rural to urban areas, while only 2.5 per cent are migrating to rural areas. Nearly 3 per cent of the migrants have changed their direction indicating a shift in occupation. This high percentage of rural urban migration is in tune with the trends observed elsewhere. It is normal for people to migrate from low

TABLE I
MIGRATION FLOWS

Gender	Rural	Urban	Rural to Urban	Rural to Urban	Total
Male	79(2.4) (56.0)	3,134(94.7) (57.7)	37(1.1) (63.8)	60(1.8) (50.4)	3,310 (57.6)
Female	62(2.5) (44.1)	2,294(94.2) (42.3)	21(0.9) (36.2)	59(2.4) (49.6)	2,436 (42.4)
Total:	141(2.5)	5,428(94.5)	58(1.0)	119(2.1)	5,746

opportunity areas to high opportunity areas. Obviously urban areas with their potential for employment attract migrants and act as a pull factor.

Comparison between sexes indicates that there is no difference between males and females in terms of migration trends. This could be because labour migration is in groups and individual migration is uncommon. Naturally wife and husband migrate together in search of work except in cases where the spouse is left behind.

Pattern of Out-migration

Distance or pattern of migration is also very important in analysis of migration. Respondents' place of destination is classified as within the district, within the state or outside the state. In other words, on the basis of current place of destination migrants were chiefly divided into intra-district, inter-district and inter-state. If the first place of destination and the current place of destination are not the same then it is deduced that there is step migration. The results are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2
PATTERN OF MIGRATION

	GENDER		
	Male	Female	Total
Intra-district	47(58.0) (1.4)	34(42.0) (1.4)	81 (1.4)
Inter-district	2,455(57.5) (74.2)	1,818(42.5) (74.6)	4273 (74.4)
Inter-state	527(56.7) (15.9)	403(43.3) (16.5)	930 (16.2)
Intra-to inter- district	11(68.8) (0.3)	5(31.3) (0.2)	16 (0.3)
Inter-district to intra-state	6(66.7) (0.2)	3(33.3) (0.1)	9 (0.2)
Inter-to intra- district	32(54.2) (1.0)	27(45.8) (1.1)	59 (1.0)
Inter-district to inter-state	104(66.2) (3.1)	53(33.8) (2.2)	157 (2.7)
Inter-state to intra-district	24(48.0) (0.7)	26(52.0) (1.1)	50 (0.9)
Intra-state to inter-district	104(60.8) (3.1)	67(39.2) (2.8)	171 (3.0)
Total:	3,310(57.6)	2,436(42.4)	5,746

It can be observed from the Table that nearly three-fourths of the migrants (74.4 per cent) are inter-district migrants indicating migration to districts other than the district of place of origin. The next highest percentage is (16.2 per cent) in the case of inter-state migrants. Migrants who reported different places as first place, second place and current place of destination are categorized separately.

As for differences between male and female migrants with regard to migration pattern, the data indicate that there is no difference; more or less the sample percentage of males (74.2) and females (74.6) have reported to be migrating to other districts in the state or inter-district migrants. Other categories also exhibited the same trend. This could be because of the same reason given in earlier section, where families are migrating and not individuals. Lack of work at the place of origin and ability of the women to earn additional income compel the male member to carry his wife along and naturally wife and husband go to the same place.

The observed trend of high percentage of intra-state or inter-district rural to urban migrants indicates that urban centres or towns in Andhra Pradesh are drawing a larger chunk of migrants from within the state. This is possibly due to the intra-state inequality which encourages migration of people from rural to urban areas within the state.

Further if there is vast difference in inter-district and inter-state, it can be attributed to the developmental activities at the state level which create new intra-state dimensions for the migrants and deter them from migrating to other states with different culture and languages.

Occupation before and after migration

It has been observed that rural-urban migration in general leads to occupational change (Caplow, 1975) and this shift will be usually from primary sector to secondary or tertiary sector which sometimes involves acquisition of new skills. Respondents of the study were asked to name their primary occupation before and after migration. Table 3 presents the data where it is found that 51.1 per cent have not changed their occupation while 48.9 per cent have done so. The male-female comparison did not indicate any difference

TABLE 3
OCCUPATIONAL CHANGE IN MIGRANTS

Gender	No Change	Change	Total
Male	1,703(51.5) (57.9)	1,607(48.5) (57.2)	3,310 (57.6)
Female	1,236(50.7) (42.1)	1,200(49.3) (42.8)	2,436 (42.4)
Total:	2,939(51.1)	2,807(48.9)	5,746

in this aspect. The observed difference is due to their representation in the sample. In other words, 51.1 per cent continued to pursue the same occupation as in the place of origin (in agreement with Upreti, 1981). Among those who have changed their occupation, 96.9 per cent have shifted to non-agricultural labour from other occupations (Table 4). This is understandable because the urban economy with its vast secondary and tertiary sectors naturally provides employment in non-agricultural sector only.

Incomes

Higher income is one of the main criteria, which makes a person migrate in the first place. Hence, respondents were asked about their monthly earnings and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 clearly shows that nearly 95 per cent of the migrants are earning between Rs 101 and 600 per month. However, 48 percent of the migrants are earning between Rs 101-350 per month followed by 46.9 per cent earning between Rs 350-600 per month. The percentage of people earning less than Rs 100 per month (0.4 per cent) and more than Rs 850 per month is negligible. A moderate 3.3 per cent earn between Rs 651 and 800 per month.

It is generally agreed that income distribution is skewed further, the differential wage payment operating in the labour-market puts women migrants at a disadvantageous position in terms of earnings as compared to their male counterparts though they do the same amount of work. This

TABLE 4
SHIFT IN OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE

Gender	Agri-culture	Agricul-tural Labour	Non-agricul-tural labour	Business	Artisan	Dependent	Others	Total
Male	2(0.1) (100.0)	-	1,557(96.9) (57.2)	-	35(2.2) (51.5)	-	13(0.8) (86.7)	1,607 (57.2)
Female	-	1(0.1) (100.0)	1,164(97.0) (42.8)	-	33(2.8) (48.5)	-	2(0.2) (13.3)	1,200 (42.8)
Total:	2(0.1)	1(0.0)	2,721(96.9)	-	68(2.4)	-	15(0.5)	2,807

TABLE 5
MONTHLY INCOME OF MIGRANT LABOUR

Gender	Up to 100	101-350	351-600	601-850	851-1,000	1,001-1,250	1,250-1,500	1,500 Plus	Total
Male	10(0.3) (41.7)	1,063(32.1) (38.5)	1,986(60.0) (73.6)	180(5.4) (94.7)	55(1.7) (93.2)	5(0.2) (100.0)	3(0.1) (100.0)	8(0.2) (88.9)	3,310
Female	14(0.6) (58.3)	1,696(69.6) (61.5)	711(29.2) (26.4)	10(0.4) (5.3)	4(0.2) (6.8)	-	-	1(0.0) (11.1)	2,436
Total:	24(0.4)	2,759(48.0)	2,697(46.9)	190(3.3)	59(1.0)	5(0.1)	3(0.1)	9(0.2)	5,746

is evident when male-female differences in monthly incomes are observed. It can be observed that while nearly 70 per cent of the females are earning below Rs 350 per month, only 32 per cent of the males are earning the same amount. In other words, in the low income category the percentage of females is double that of males in the same category. The trend is reversed in the case of middle income groups where 60 per cent of the males are earning between Rs 350-600 per month and only 29.2 per cent are earning the same among female migrants. The percentages of other income groups are found to be heavily tilted in favour of male migrants.

When the average income of the migrants is compared for males and females, males are found to be earning Rs 450 per month, whereas females' average monthly income is only Rs 323 per month, which is 28 per cent lower than that of the males. From these results it may be concluded that female migrants are concentrated more in lower income groups with mean incomes which is 28 per cent lower than that of males.

Reasons for migration

The reasons for migration assume significance in migration studies because they give an understanding of the push and pull factors operating in a particular geographical area and can be a key to regulate or control heavy out-migration. Migrants were asked why did they migrate in the first place, the responses are categorized and presented in Table 6.

As can be seen in the Table, lack of work is stated to be the main reason for migration by 71.9 per cent of the migrants, and 8.4 per cent stated low wages as the reason for migration, together these two reasons account for more than 80 per cent of the migrants. Some of the migrants gave no work and low wages as the reasons for migration (8.7 per cent). If these people are also added nearly 90 per cent of the migrants have migrated because of lack of work and low wages. Important among other reasons are inadequate land (8.7 per cent). Inadequate land is operationalized here as uneconomic landholding size. Data not reported here indicate that migrants who gave this reason belong to marginal farmers category whose average landholding size is roughly 1.5 acres. With agriculture as the prime occupation the

TABLE 6
REASONS FOR MIGRATION

Gender	No Work	Low Wages	Land not Adequate	No Work + Low Wages	Irrigation	No Higher Income	To Earn	More than Two Reasons	Any Other	Total
Male	2,339(70.7) (56.6)	287(8.7) (59.5)	331(10.0) (66.1)	224(6.8) (53.6)	43(1.3) (60.6)	19(0.6) (67.9)	17(0.5) (68.0)	50(1.5) (56.2)	3,310 (57.6)	
Female	1,793(73.6) (43.4)	195(8.0) (40.5)	170(7.0) (33.9)	194(8.0) (46.4)	28(1.1) (39.4)	9(0.4) (32.1)	8(0.3) (32.0)	39(1.6) (43.8)	2,436 (42.4)	
Total:	4,132(71.9)	482(8.4)	501(8.7)	418(7.3)	71(1.2)	28(0.5)	25(0.5)	89(1.5)	5,746	

income from land is not adequate to maintain families, so migration becomes inevitable for these people to supplement their incomes.

Comparison of male and female migrants did not indicate any significant differences in responses to reasons for migration except in the case of reason 'Land not adequate' (66.1 per cent males and 33.9 per cent females). Together these two are related to agriculture. This could be due to the fact it is the male member who holds the ownership of land and the basic cultivator and female members of the family will be assisting the male member hence the variation in response.

Based on this analysis, it may be concluded that lack of work and low wages are the main reasons for migration, and responses of males and females did not differ much in this regard.

Suggestions of Migrants

Checking of large scale out-migration cannot be successful with the understanding of local conditions alone. The perceptions of migrants are also important for any possible measures. So respondents of this sample were asked what measures they would like the government to take. Results are presented in Table 7.

It can be observed from the Table that the highest percentage of migrants (36.4 per cent) wanted distribution of land as a measure to check out-migration followed by 34.2 per cent who stated self-employment as a measure. These two responses together account for 70 per cent of the migrants. Bank loans are stated as possible measure by 16.7 per cent of the migrants. The other responses included provision of irrigation facilities (5.4 per cent) and guarantee of minimum wages (4.3 per cent). Comparison of male and female migrants did not indicate any significant differences. The observed differences in terms of percentage can be attributed to their proportion in the total sample.

These observations indicate that distribution of land, provision of employment or work and bank loans seem to be the possible measures that can check out-migration as perceived by the migrants in the sample Mandals of Bijenepally and Wanaparthys.

TABLE 7
SUGGESTIONS OF MIGRANTS TO CHECK OUT-MIGRATION

Gender	Land	Self-Employment	Bank Loan	Irrigation	Minimum Wages	Industries	Incentives to Artisans	Not Necessary	Total
Male	1,144(34.6) (54.8)	1,180(35.6) (60.0)	556(16.8) (57.9)	190(5.7) (60.7)	135(4.1) (55.1)	78(2.4) (58.6)	20(0.6) (66.7)	7(0.2) (77.7)	3,310 (57.6)
Female	945(38.8) (45.2)	786(32.3) (40.0)	405(16.6) (42.1)	123(5.0) (39.3)	110(4.5) (44.9)	55(2.3) (41.4)	10(0.4) (33.3)	2(0.1) (22.3)	2,436 (42.4)
Total:	2,089(36.4)	1,966(34.2)	961(16.7)	313(5.4)	245(4.3)	133(2.3)	30(0.5)	9(0.2)	5,746

Conclusion

Migration is a universal process that can be found everywhere. While some amount of migration is inevitable and natural, it assumes significance when large chunks of population migrate and the reasons for migration need to be looked into. It is fairly normal when people migrate for social reasons, for instance, migration due to marriage in the case of females but when the migration is for economic reasons, specially in the case of women, the problem acquires significance.

The reported high percentage of inter-district migrants in the sample, migrating in the direction of rural to urban indicate that urban centres or towns in Andhra Pradesh are pulling migrants from within the state. One reason for this could be the inter-state inequality, which encourages migration from rural to urban areas within the state. The vast secondary and tertiary sectors of the urban areas seem to be accommodating these migrants as non-agricultural labour, where nearly 50 per cent had to shift to non-agricultural labour from other occupations. There seems to be disparity in incomes of female and male migrants. Almost 70 per cent women are earning below Rs 350 per month, whereas only 32 per cent of males are in the same category. Women migrants are earning on an average 28 per cent less pay for the same work.

However, at a more general level rural out-migration can be checked by increasing employment opportunities in rural hinterland. An alternative could be injecting some investments that create employment in smaller and peripheral urban areas around rural hinterland. Investment in rural areas in secondary and tertiary sectors may slowly alter the character of the rural area which may become a semi-urban unit in due course.

So attention has to be focused towards the policies that develop backward areas with a close examination of their potentials and alternative possibilities. In this case Lipton's suggestions for correcting the inequalities in migration seem pertinent. They are as follows:

1. Setting up of Rural Labour Exchanges and loans to permit the acquisition of simple skills usable elsewhere;

TRIBAL WOMEN'S ISSUES

Jakka Parthasarathy

Introduction

The women's issues, have of late, attracted the attention of social scientists. There is new focus and idiom on the problems of women. It was with the declaration of the women's decade, that the importance of studying various new facets of the role of women was first realized. In India, though the initial focus of research was on the status of women, it later shifted to women's role and participation in economic production.

The woman is defined by the *Random House Dictionary of the English Language*, as the female human being, an adult female person, feminine nature, characteristics, or feelings, a sweetheart or paramour, mistress and a female person who cleans house, cooks, etc. In our ancient texts while great care has been taken to classify men in detail, women are generally treated as a uniform category and unambiguously equated with the low caste (Manu, ix, 153). Women were never accorded an independent status though they were assigned a very high place in the house. Subservice of women to men is summed up in the *Manusmriti* where it is stated that a woman should never be independent. According to Savita Vishnoi (1987), "due to ambiguous and contradictory remarks often found in our available early texts the social status of women in ancient India still remains somewhat obscure and even controversial". She further stated: "condition of women in different countries and times has varied from total slavery to complete freedom and sometimes even to a status superior to that of men". Thus, there is a great discrepancy between the idealized and defined concept of women and the real life situation in which women find themselves.

In tribal society, the woman's role is indispensable.

Issues of tribal women cannot be isolated from those of tribal men. As Lowie (1920) observed, "neither superstitious sentiments nor man's physical superiority have produced a greater debarment of primitive woman, that she is generally well treated and able to influence masculine decisions regardless of all theory as to her inferiority or impurity". Roy Burman (1975) stated: "the early division of labour led to the first technological revolution, provided an opportunity to the primitive woman to observe the behaviour of the plants in different situations...it was not nature, that was responsible for the germination of the seeds, it was by the grace of the mysterious reproductive power of the woman that earth was fertilised". Gopal Sarana (1988) explained: "since a tribal woman does not play any role in the public domain her position is bound to be different from other women who are not confined to the home. It is apparent that if the status of women in any society is to be judged in terms of how much of work she does outside the home, that of the tribal women is bound to suffer". Thus these observations reveal the need to examine the tribal women in contemporary India.

This article seeks to examine some issues of the women of Kanikaran tribe living in Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu.

The Kanikaran

The Kanikaran are found in Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu. They are also found in Trivandrum and Quilon Districts of Kerala. Their total population in Tamil Nadu, according to 1981 Census, is 3,698, out of which 1,878 are males and 1,820 are females. Their population in Kanyakumari District is 3,698. The Government of India, recognized them under the name 'Kanikaran or Kanikkar' and gave them the status of 'Scheduled Tribe'.

The Kanikaran people call themselves as Kanikkar or Kanikaran, while other community people refer to them by the name 'Kanis'. The male Kanikaran suffix 'Kani' to their names. The earlier writers (N. Subramanya Aiyar, 1903; Thurston, 1909; J.H. Hutton, 1931) and Census of India, 1961-1964 referred to the Kanikaran by several synonyms such as Kaniyan, Velamars, Malai Arasan, Malavedans, etc.

but except Kanikaran or Kanis, no other synonyms are nowadays referred to Kanikaran. The literal meaning of the word Kanikaran means hereditary proprietor of land. They were said to be the original inhabitants of the mountains of South Travancore. They speak Malampashai, which is a South Dravidian language of the Malayalam-Tamil sub-group. They are short and dark-skinned, have round faces and stout but flat noses. The men wear dhoti and towel and women have a long cloth wound round their waist and wear a small cloth over their body. The women also use coloured sarees and blouses. They say that their ancestors wore a garment made of jungle fibre. The women are not used to wearing too many jewels in their ears and nose but they use a number of brass rings on the fingers. Many women have tattoo marks.

They are non-vegetarians and their staple food is tapioca. They avoid milk and milk products but are fond of coffee and tea. The Kanikaran have no broad subdivisions but they are divided into ten exogamous groups, called Illams of which the names are: Kai, Palamala, Talamala, Kurumilla, Perim Mangot, Mut, Peringalayhi, Vel and Vellanat. Among the Kanikaran, family is a social group characterized by common residence. Monogamy is the most common form of marriage. Polygamy is permitted only in the case of infertility. Divorce and desertion are permitted and widow or divorcee's remarriage is allowed. The Kanikaran have a headman called *Muttukani*, who presides over their tribal council called *sabha*. The *pilathi*, a magician or *mantravadi* is the religious head of the Kanikaran settlement. The Kanikaran have received and continue to receive aids and concessions from the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department of the Government of Tamil Nadu but they are imbuing more political awareness from the activists-run voluntary organizations.

Area of Stu

The present article is based on the data collected from 11 Kanikaran settlements, four in Vilavancode Taluka and seven in Kalkulam Taluka in Kanyakumari District in Tamil Nadu during 1989. The Kanyakumari District was a part of Travancore for a long time and was merged with Tamil Nadu

in 1956 under the State Reorganisation Act. The district is spread out with an area of 1,684 sq km, between 77°05 feet and 77°36 feet of the eastern longitude and 8°03 feet and 8°35 feet of the northern latitude. The district is bounded by Nellai Kattamomman District in the north and north-east, by Kerala State in the north-west and confluence of Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean in the west and south. In addition to Kanikaran, four other tribal communities are living in the district. The Kanikaran settlements are nearer to the river beds and freshwater lakes.

The studied tribal settlements are inhabited mostly by the Kanikaran tribe with a few Kanlyan tribal households, and situated amidst forest and hills, the latter with an elevation of 4,200 feet. The area receives from 38.6 mm to 349.3 mm rainfall annually. The Kanikaran settlements are connected with other neighbouring villages only by footpaths. There are several rubber estates around the settlements. The total studied settlements, inhabited by the Kanikaran, have 237 households with 1,051 individuals of which 514 (48.91 per cent) are males and 537 (51.09 per cent) are females. The literacy among males and females is 21.92 per cent and 28.81 per cent respectively.

Social Organization

The Kanikaran differentiate their status according to their exogamous groups, that is, illams. While organizing their way of life through social relations within the illams, the superior illams like Kurumillom, Kai and Perim forbid the participation of the women of inferior illams in social functions. The maintenance of the status of high rank through the elimination of the women of the inferior group within the community leads towards much social differentiation among the Kanikaran community. During the author's fieldwork at Manalikadu settlement, a Kanikaran of 'Kai' illam arranged the marriage of his daughter with a boy of 'mut' illam but invited only the males of 'talamala' and 'vel' groups by telling they should not bring their women to the marriage. The women of these two groups living in Mookkarakal settlement decided not to allow their men to participate in the marriage, but did not succeed because their men believed in the tradition of banning women in the functions of high illams.

Child marriages among the Kanikaran were common and in olden days girls were married young. In the Travancore Census of India Report of 1901, it was described that Kanikaran girls are married above eight years of age and boys above 16. The report also mentioned that, 'it is not necessary that the husband should be older than the wife and instances are not rare of a woman of 35 marrying a boy of 20.' Nowadays there are cases among the Kanikaran that men of 20-30 years living with girls of 14-18 years and women of 25-35 years living with boys of 20-25 years. When questioned, men told that it is safest to have young brides because the older ones run away to their parents homes; whereas younger girls get accustomed to their husband's homes. The other younger boys told that mature and grown up women were the safest because they run the house with full responsibility. Thus in between the male concepts 'run away, and mature', the women are often under the issues of desertion, divorce, remarriage, etc.

Modes of acquiring mates were by courtship, by service and by mutual consent but nowadays it is by negotiation among elders. They never practised giving a bride-price but allowed a kind of dowry where bride's father had to give billhook, chopper, cooking vessels, grains, pulses, etc, to the father of the groom. The Kanikaran, in common with other tribes, use the billhook for a variety of purposes, that is, for loosening the soil, for cutting firewood, for protection from animals, etc. Both men and women carry the billhook while going out for work, but the married women usually preserve the billhook given by their husbands, since the women attach a cultural significance in their belief systems to the billhook given by their men during marriages, which stands for marital continuity with harmony. Nowadays, during marriage negotiations, the effort to avoid the billhook in the list of dowry materials has become a main cause for women's worry. Recently, a few Kanikaran women of Thalakkumalai settlement demanded billhook as dowry, saying that they are even ready to lose other items of dowry including money and stainless steel vessels.

The Kanikaran men place a high value on chastity of their married women. Though divorces /desertions are permitted for incompatibility, barrenness, adultery, etc, men take adultery of women as a serious offence and treat such women

with great abhorrence and punish them in a cruel way. Usually the punishment inflicted on such women by the Kanikaran *sabha* is giving 15 lashes with a cane on the buttocks by her husband in a public place before the invitees. The male person involved in adultery may escape without punishment. In the year 1988 at Ettankunnu settlement, 'P' had developed extramarital relationship with 'M', husband of 'V'. This case was brought before the *sabha* by the husband of 'P'. The *sabha* was convened and the *muttukani* decided that 'P' be given 15 harsh slaps (instead of lashes) on her face by the husband in front of the house of 'M'. The decision of the *sabha* was practised before all Kanikaran invitees. After this incident, the Kanikaran women opined that the man involved in adultery should also be punished by the *sabha*. The partial judgements of the male dominated Kanikaran *sabha* are becoming constantly provoking issues for the women.

The family of a Kanikaran is known as 'Kanikudi'. The data shows that out of the total 237 families studied, 75.53 per cent are nuclear families, 16.45 per cent are extended families and 8.02 per cent are broken families. Among the Kanikaran, the general custom is that when the son gets married he lives separately with his wife. When the husband dies or deserts her, the woman starts living with her parents along with unmarried children until she marries again and establishes a new household. The composition of the 8.02 per cent of the broken families among the Kanikaran are widow, widowed daughter and her children; widow and her deserted daughter; widow and her widowed elder sister or a single member. The existence of more number of broken families reveals that the women after losing their men adapted to the Kanikudi where they can live alone or together with young children, earn income and perform rituals without men. There is a case in Thotamalai settlement where a young Kanikaran woman, called Devaki, married twice, remained deserted, started living in a hut with her two children and has become a model of courage for the other Kanikaran women who approach her for suggestions whenever they quarrel with their husbands.

Consumption pattern plays an important role in the family. Choice of food, serving and eating the food and food

habits remain the principal points of conflict and confrontation between men and women in the family. Kanikaran's staple food was and is tapioca and the women are experts in preparing many delicious dishes out of sweet and bitter tapioca. The women relish tapioca with dry or fresh fish. They also like to have food along with their men. But because of the penetration of the 'motel-food' by the neighbouring hotel traders, the Kanikaran men who had tasted the food in motels, started pressurizing their women to prepare idli, vada and rice, etc. in their houses, causing much consternation to the women. Nowadays, because of this new rice food consumption pattern the women avoid having their food along with men and this new pattern is also leading to quarrels due to the bad taste of the preparations. In the former days, the Kanikaran were not in the habit of drinking liquor, but this habit has been borrowed recently from other neighbouring castes.

The evolution of family subsequently transformed the rule of inheritance of property. According to L A. Krishna Iyer (1926), "in every primitive community, age is a source of reverence and influence. Considerations of fitness therefore made it desirable to entrust the management of common interests of the family to the eldest and most experienced member". The pattern of inheritance is, thus, one of the stronger indicators of position of an individual. The rule of inheritance among the Kanikaran is on the basis of 'Marumakkathayam' law of inheritance, according to which a man's property goes to his sister's son. But due to several factors, this system has started to break down slowly in Kanikaran society, the male members of the household developing the desire to hand over their property to their own sons, rather than to the sons of their sister. The Kanikaran consider house, land, material goods, jewels, livestock, etc., as property. The slow shift of the rule of inheritance from the children of sisters to own sons made a dent on the position of women among the Kanikaran. The male children started to point out the method of local Hindu castes in sharing the property among only the male children. When the *sabha* in a few settlements accepted this type of male inheritance, the Kanikaran women started insisting that their self-acquired property should go to their married daughters. Thus the new thinking of inheritance pattern only for male sons is raising

new issues for their sisters.

Religious Organization

The Kanikaran followed the religious cult of animism. Animism is that view of the world which ascribes life thought to inanimate things. At present, the Kanikaran have three kinds of deities, namely, spirits, minor divinities and superior divinities. The spirits worshipped by the Kanikaran are generally known by the name of *chidro*, literally, death or the dead and their aid is incessantly invoked by them in reverential piety when oppressed by disease or starvation. They think that their dead ancestors live by preference in hills, trees, rocks of great dimensions and in the barren women. The minor divinities worshipped by them are Madaswamy, Karuppuswami, Mantramurti and Vedemalabhadram, etc. For these deities, the oldest Kanikaran male person with the assistance of unmarried girls who have attained puberty, gives the offerings. The superior divinities, worshipped by them are two in number, namely, Sasta and Bhagavathi. They worship these gods by offering tender coconuts, fruits and fried grain. Sasta is always looked upon as a beneficent deity and the women worship Sasta for good marital life and fertility.

A few Kanikaran, comprising about 7.82 per cent, converted into Christianity of Roman Catholic Missionary Estate of Kattalmalai management. Most of the women, who like to follow animism and Sasta cult never liked to become Christians but had to accept their men's embraced faith under forceful circumstances. These are cases in studied settlements that first daughter-in-law was brought from Christian Kanikaran family at the instance of husband, and second daughter-in-law was brought from Hindu Kanikaran family at the instance of wife and all of them are living under one roof worshipping the photographs of gods, Hindu as well as Christian. Mixed religious beliefs are giving more strain to women of animistic beliefs than to men following the free faith.

Economic Organization

The main task of economic study is to find out how men

and women organized their activities in solving the problems of allocation within the limits set by their ecology as transformed by culture, technology and the state of knowledge and values. They were and are forest dwellers and were categorized as hunters and food gatherers of Travancore hills. They also practised 'thaungia' cultivation (shifting cultivation) but now they have shifted to settled agriculture besides the collection of minor forest produce. A few Kanikaran were employed by the then government in collecting honey, cardamom, wax, ginger, dammar or kuntirikkam and elephant-tusks for a small remuneration known as 'Kutivaram'.

The data on the occupational structure of the studied settlement shows that among the workers, 58.36 per cent are males and 56.61 per cent are females. It is also found that among the women workers, 54.19 per cent are in the age group of 15-59 years and 2.42 per cent of the women are in the age group of 60 and above. The distribution of occupational activity of the Kanikaran households in total studied area is as follows: Self-cultivation (39.66 per cent); plantation labour (20.25 per cent); forest labour (14.77 per cent); collection of minor forest produce (7.59 per cent); modern employment (5.91 per cent) and miscellaneous activities (11.81 per cent) with the combination of agriculture, labour, petty business like hotel, provision shop, etc.

After independence, the Kanikaran were given the facilities to cultivate lands in the forest. The Forest Department (Project Report, 1987) had allotted five acres of land to each Kanikaran family for agricultural purposes. As the allotment of the lands was made to the male head of the family, only the Kanikaran male members have become the holders of the lands and their women comprise the family of their respective landholding husbands. At present, the overall data of the landholding among the Kanikaran households of study area shows that 7.6 per cent are landless, 36.30 per cent are having the landholdings between 0.01 and 2.50 acres. 35.44 per cent of the households have the lands in between 2.50 and 5.00 acres, 18.56 per cent have the lands in between 2.50 and 5 acres, 18.56 per cent have the lands between 5 and 10 acres, and 2.10 per cent of them have lands above 10 acres. These land statistics, collected from Kanikaran are away from the truth, the truth is most of the male landholders

leased/mortgaged their allotted lands to non-tribal encroachers as 'debtors' and now both landholding Kanikaran men and their women are working on their own lands as hidden labourers of encroachers. This non-tribal lord force is making Kanikaran men as land slaves and the Kanikaran women as slaves of landlords.

The Tribal Welfare Department of Collectorate, Nagercoil is planning to take up a project under the goal of 'security to food, accessibility to food and availability of food to all tribals of the district'. Already there are schemes for Kanikaran under 'Tribal Development', in the areas of drinking water, health, education, soil conservation, food security, industrial training, etc.

Political Organization

Each Kanikaran settlement has got a headman called *muttukani*. The tribal Panchayat in the settlement is formed by the council of elders known as *sabha* which solves the disputes within the tribe and between the different inhabitants of the settlement. The *sabha* also looks after the maintenance of the settlement ritually and socially because the members are the constituent unit of Kanikaran Political Organization. The *sabha* is composed of the adult Kanikaran people of the settlement, but there is no Kanikaran woman representative in the *sabha* of any settlement. The cases that usually come under the purview of *sabha* are of three kinds: (i) disputes regarding the cases of inheritance and sharing of allotted land among the kinsmen; (ii) disputes involving women, like illicit relations, divorce cases, marriages within the clans, descent of an illegitimate child, etc; and (iii) disputes regarding payment of loans, forest labour, stealing of crops, misrepresentation of facts, etc. The officials in the hierarchy who have certain roles to play in political organization of Kanikaran, that is, *muthukani*, *vizhikan*, *pilathi*, *kuluthupuzha* and *mottamudu* are all males. Thus the political organization of the Kanikaran reveals that there is no role in it for their women except attending the *sabha* as witnesses in the cases involving women. The hold of the *sabha* is still strong because of the failure of statutory Panchayat system in the studied area.

Recently the Kanikaran leadership has thrown some

light on the participation of women in the new order of political mobilization. A man or woman is regarded as an effective leader if he/she has the ability to reveal the personal styles of conduct, and to adapt readily to different situational requirements. The informal leadership has become a new trend among the Kanikaran. It includes the influential persons of the settlements, who are not the members of their traditional *sabha*. Their source of power is tradition, and modernity in the new social order. The critical issues like tribal identity, economic participation, religious movements, language, non-tribal settlers in tribal areas, law of inheritance, role of voluntary organizations, etc, turned a few Kanikaran men and women into active leaders in their respective settlements. In the study area 15 Kanikaran female leaders have been identified, who have time and interest to keep themselves in touch with the concerns of their fellow tribal within and outside the settlement. The working voluntary organizations of the area have also started to use the strength of the female leaders of the Kanikaran in creating awareness among them.

The Kanikaran women leaders took active part during the General Assembly Elections. The General Elections to the Tamil Nadu Assembly was held on 21 January 1989. The study area comes under Vilavancode constituency. All the leaders of Kanikaran, men and women during elections became political workers of their respective parties. The data shows that out of 15 identified women leaders, three were associated with the party of DMK (Karunanidhi), five were with the party of AIADMK (Jayalalitha), four were with the party of Congress (I) (Moopanar), two were with BJP (Hindu Munnani) and one was with the party of AIADMK (Janaki MGR). The women leaders actively participated and mobilized their women force towards their respective parties. At last, the Congress (I) candidate won the election. The impact of General Election on the women, was temporary but it inspired them with new political equations, and stimulated their participation in 'Kanikkarakal Nala Urmai Sangam', which is working actively under the supervision of Thiru P.J. Mannemplavan, a human rights activist based in Trivandrum (Kerala) but working at Nagercoil, for the welfare of Kanikaran tribal people. Though the women are participating in this Sangam with commitment, but they feel

that they and their problems are neglected by the Sangam, dominated as it is by Kanikaran male force.

Conclusion

Women were described by a few earlier writers as the weaker sex, inferior, impure, dependents, controversial status holders, with mysterious reproductive powers. The role of women in different societies and times has varied from controversial unproductive to productive and unambiguously equated with men in all spheres of life. This idealized equation gave strength and status to women but in the process the women are under strain because of excessive demands of men.

The study shows that the issues like super clan groups, concepts of run away and mature wives, exclusion of billhook in dowry items, public shame punishment to adulterous women, loneliness through desertion, changing consumption pattern, change in rule of inheritance, adoption of mixed religion, emerging agrarian structure, non-tribal lord force, land rights, male favoured *sabha* judgements, differences in cultural belief systems, etc, subjected the Kanikaran women to great stress. Though a few Kanikaran women developed leadership qualities exhibited during happenings, they were restrained continuously by their men. Men have become check-mates to women. Even then, the Kanikaran women display harmony which could be the source of their men's strength. This may be viewed as a growing familiarity with the harsh contemporary situation.

ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE FOR WOMEN

A Study of Specific Programme

G.Venkateswarlu

Introduction

Women who constitute nearly 50 per cent of the population are the most harassed lot of the society. This is due to illiteracy, general poverty, social customs and the family taboos that prevail in various localities and the families. Added to this, male members' domination in the family has further sub-judicated women in the family. As a result of this, women are deprived of their legitimate rights, subjected to malnutrition and ill-treatment and are even thrusted with the responsibilities of looking after the other family members in some circumstances because of the unquestioned and unchallenged behaviour of the male members.

Women are forced to work as farm labourers in the rural areas and compelled to work as domestic servants in urban areas. However, in certain castes and tribes, the family tradition is carried out in the form of some well-established and routine trades like selling of flowers for hairdressing, exchange of utensils for used clothes, selling of vegetables, etc. Even in these activities which could be called as petty trades the women do not have economic independence, for which they have to depend on the male members for financial support to start and later to sustain the trade. Many a time they are also forced to go to the private moneylenders to borrow money, at high rate of interest which in turn may not relieve them from the bondage for years. They are forced to do so simply to carry on their activities to sustain a family, as the income of the wage-earner is either meagre or inadequate.

It is felt that the best way of helping the woman to attain economic independence is to make her literate. Education

will make her aware of her status in the society and to help understand the level of exploitation she is facing. Literacy will also help her to understand and appreciate the efforts of the government in making the women aware of the nutrition, mother and child care, family and child welfare, etc, whereby she can help herself and her family.

With this objective in mind the Hyderabad Slum Improvement Project (HSIP) programmes are making efforts to incorporate the general progress of the government within Slum Improvement Programme. A lot of effort is being made in arranging awareness camps in the slum areas amongst the women members by holding 'Regular Mother Leader Training classes', 'Under Five Clinics', 'Immunization Drive', 'General Health Check-ups', 'Sanitation Drive', and 'Health Check-up Camps'. A significant change in the slum women is found where these camps were taken up. Although the achievement may be small but is significant to show that this approach is bound to yield results quickly. To sustain these efforts, women members under the socio-economic programmes are encouraged to take benefit of the various training programmes designed to give them economic independence and also generate capacity to command the family. Many women have started their own petty enterprises as a result of the training and have set an example for others to emulate.

Community Based Loans

A novel programme taken up under the HSIP, is the scheme of 'Community Based Loans'. Under this scheme, Mahila Mandal of the slum collects a certain amount from every member and approaches Urban Community Development for an equal amount, as interest-free loan, repayable in instalments. With this total amount at their disposal, they advance loans to their members at a certain ratio, repayable in 10 equal monthly instalments. A nominal interest is charged so that the interest adds up to the fund of the Mahila Mandal for maintenance of the scheme. The women members who have taken up such benefit (from such community based loan scheme) are today in a happy position and have freed themselves from the clutches of the private moneylenders and are able to command a respect from their

male members because of their economic independence.

Community Based Loan Programme Under Overseas Development Administration (UK): Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad

Under Overseas Development Administration (ODA) Programme (specially Phase-III) the socio-economic activities are given more stress for raising household income and reduced deprivation and poverty among the slum poor. Particularly, women are given preferential credit in these programmes with a view to raise their economic and social standards.

Under the ODA programme, through training programmes in tailoring, embroidery, food preservation and preparation of jams, etc. loans at micro level on shared basis have been introduced for the first time to create self-confidence in the slum women. This approach is called "*Community Based Loan Scheme or System*" as a part and parcel of Urban Micro Enterprises Scheme. In short, the Community Based Loan Scheme, started in a slum by individual contributions has become lending and borrowing group from among themselves. This system developed a sense of brotherhood among the slum families sharing the problems among themselves and strengthening the slum integration and oneness.

This Community Based Loan under Urban Micro-Enterprises Scheme has been started in selected slums of ODA, that is, at Bapu Nagar, Om Nagar, Yousuf Bazar, Khadria Colony, etc. with the following main objectives:

1. To reduce deprivation and poverty, specially among the women in each family.
2. To improve investment capacity linking to the market needs at minimum level.
3. To develop a need for saving habits in slum families and importance of spending.
4. To improve their economic and social status in family and society.

Experience and observation of the working of the scheme indicate that the most visible and noteworthy benefit obtained from the operation of the scheme is the courage and strength

it has created among women. It has made them realize their inner strengths and capacity to help family. Illustration of a few success stories given below will demonstrate this fact.

Financial Structure under Community based Loan

- i) Beneficiary contribution, and
- ii) Outside assistance.

It is a fact that most of the slum families live under substandard level as most of them are below poverty line. The motivational effort of a social worker is needed for mobilizing the families to contribute self money and seek outside assistance on matching basis. Motivation of families resulted in achieving 30-50 per cent self-contribution which is no mean achievement.

After the motivation for self-contribution is completed, the members of the locality gather at one place and discuss about channeling the process of financial improvement and thus they decide with assistance of Programme Officer/ Community Development Officer (CDO) in ODA as to how much money can be matched. The assistance to the self-contribution will always fluctuate and differ from one slum to another, depending upon the quantum of money available with them. In the ODA programmes it is a practice to lend assistance at 50 per cent of the total requirement where the remaining 50 per cent will always be available with the beneficiaries who deposit, at the beginning of the programme, in any bank.

CDO is in charge of these programmes. He is originally connected with Community Development and ploughing social techniques in the families thus motivating them to accept the programme. The Community Based Loan (CBL) is being closely monitored with regard to day-to-day deposits, recoveries, lending loans, counter examinations, etc, which are taken care by the CDO, members of the Mahila Mandal and neighbourhood committees. The programme is assisted by the Programme Officer under the overall guidance and support of Additional Commissioner ODA, Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad.

The successfulness of the programme can be understood by having a glance at the following case studies.

Case Studies

1. Smt A. Laxmi, W/o Pochaiah, aged 25 years is residing at Bapu Nagar slum for 10 years. She belongs to BC Community. Her husband is a daily wage-earner with average income of Rs 500 per month. The family consists of six members including four children. The income earned by Pochaiah was not sufficient to meet the requirements of the family needs. Apart from this, being an alcoholic Pochaiah spent more than 50 per cent of his earnings on personal expenditure. When Pochaiah was affected with some disease and could not earn, the family had to face lot of hardships to get even their daily bread.

Anticipating the bleak future Laxmi decided to do something on her own and started vending aluminium and steel utensils in which she had some experience and knowledge. At the time of introduction of CBL programme, she came forward seeking guidance from CDO and became a member in the scheme of the CBL. Initially she availed a loan amount of Rs 1,000 and started the business. In her own words, "I buy the silver utensils from the wholesale market twice in a week to the tune of Rs 1,000. I sell them by going through streets and carrying utensils in a basket. Majority of my customers belong to poor and middle class groups."

Then her husband also realized his responsibility and started earning and contributing something to the family. Consequently the family's financial position has strengthened and through savings they are able to give their children good education in the nearby school. She is also clearing her other debts and paying monthly instalments to the Mahila Mandal regularly.

Now Laxmi is saving Rs 320 per month which she intends to use for diversification of the business by encouraging her husband to start vegetable vending. She is also seeking some additional loan for improvement of her business.

2. Smt Yadamma, W/o Muthaiah, aged 35 years is residing at Bapu Nagar and belongs to BC Community and her husband is working as a labourer. Her family consists of seven members including five children. She borrowed some loan from moneylender and some amount from her father

and started the business of selling steel and aluminium utensils and fancy goods like bangles, etc, on mobile/moving cart in exchange for cash and old clothes. After becoming a member in the CBL scheme she got a loan of Rs 1,000 to improve existing business thus bringing a change in her economic status.

Now she is economically well off and holds stock (utensils) worth Rs 5,000. After clearing the first loan, she has been saving around 10 per cent of her earnings (Rs 400 to Rs 500 every month). She is sending three daughters and two sons to the nearby school.

Now they are very happy and are in a position to guide other people who are poor and want to develop and come up like Smt Yadamma. She is a regular payee of loan instalments.

3. Kum Jamuna Rani was born in a poor family and a resident of Jawahar Janatha Housing Colony slum situated in Secunderabad. At 24 she leads a hard life, shouldering responsibility of one dependent brother and mother. She lost her father five years back. She has three brothers and one sister. Her father, when alive, had celebrated the marriage of two brothers and one sister. Following the demise of her father, whole burden of maintenance of the family had fallen on her. She was educated up to SSC, in the absence of any employment she was finding it difficult to sustain the family. In such circumstances she approached ODA for assistance and got benefited.

There are volumes of success stories under this ODA programme in each and every activity and the present case study of Kum Jamuna Rani's is a case in a point. She joined as a trainee in tailoring centre run by ODA at Jawahar Janatha Housing Colony Centre in her locality. For one year she had undergone training in tailoring course. Afterwards to improve her skills further, she attended an advanced training programme in tailoring. Now with the help of ODA loan she has started her own tailoring centre with two sewing machines and employed three women members in her centre. Today she is earning Rs 1,500 to 1,700 and with this income she is now able to improve her family's standard of living. Further taking her active involvement in the slum development activities into consideration in the year 1992,

she was elected as General Secretary of Abhyudaya Mahila Mandali.

4. Smt Hussainamma, aged 49 years, is residing in the Yusuf Bazar. She belongs to SC community and her family consists of her husband Jammanna and three children. Her main occupation is cobbling. Once she was getting the raw material from the wholesaler on credit basis and only after selling the manufactured chappals she was able to pay the raw material cost. In this process she was not able to earn sufficient amount for her family maintenance.

Since she is an enrolled member in the "Community Based Loan Society", she obtained a loan of Rs 500 and with this financial assistance she was able to purchase raw material on reasonable price. Now she is earning Rs 2,000 per month. As her financial position has improved she is sending her children to school. Further she is repaying the loan regularly.

5. Smt Pochamma, aged 32 years, is living in Yousuf Bazar with her husband and four children. She belongs to SC community and traditionally they are cobblers. When she was with her parents she learned making of chappals and she is good at making chappals with used tyres in different sizes. In this business her investment was Rs 1,000 which was sanctioned by ODA scheme and she was earning Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,500 per month. To improve her business she entered into a contract with the other chappal manufacturers and at present she is having a turnover of Rs 5,000 per month. Now she has become a popular woman in that area. Her standard of living has developed and now she is sending her children to school

6. Smt Aktar Begum, W/o Late Mohd. Anwar, is a widow residing in Om Nagar slum. After the death of her husband she was finding it difficult to maintain her family consisting of her three children. In such circumstances she joined CBL scheme and got loan of Rs 2,000. With this amount she started a grocery shop and now earns around Rs 1,000 per month. This income is helping her, to some extent to maintain her family. As she has repaid the loan amount, now she is trying for further assistance under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana for improvement of her business.

7. Smt Buddamma, an illiterate woman, aged 35 years, is residing in the Bapu Nagar slum, with her six children. Her husband Nandan is also illiterate and is working on daily wages. His earnings are not at all sufficient to maintain day-to-day needs of their family. To supplement the family income, she started selling utensils which are purchased from wholesalers for a small amount. Afterwards she became a member in the CBL and obtained a sum of Rs 1,000 and opened a shop at Narsing Market, on which she earns a profit of Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,000 per month. As their financial status has improved, their children are now attending the school and their standard of living is comparatively better. She has also applied for Jawahar Rozgar Yojana loan with a view to develop and expand her business.

8. Smt Subhadra is one of the residents of the Om Nagar slum. Her husband Narsing Rao is an unemployed person. Knowing the facts of present day life, Subhadra wanted to come up in life and lead a better life like some of her neighbours. She started her own cut-piece business, and started selling blouse pieces, saris, children's garments, etc, at her home. She started this business with an initial assistance of Rs 1,800 from CBL scheme and later on Rs 4,000 were sanctioned to her from JRY scheme. With this loan amount she has improved her business and is earning Rs 3,000 per month. She is able to send her children to school regularly, who have studied up to intermediate level. She teaches her children at home without engaging a private tutor. Her status in her kin group as well as in the society has improved to a greater extent.

9. Smt Sathyavathi, aged 32, is residing in the Om Nagar slum along with her husband Bapu Rao and four children. Her husband's small earning was not sufficient to maintain their family's basic needs. Hence she decided to start a small vegetable vending business to supplement the family income.

When she came to know about the Community Based Loan Scheme, she approached the Committee and became a member, upon which she got a sum of Rs 1,800 as loan to start the business. In her own words "I buy vegetables from the wholesale market at Miralam Mandi daily, worth Rs 800 to Rs 1,000 and sell them in Om Nagar." Now her financial

position has improved and she is able to save some amount and send her children to school. The present financial conditions permit her to provide good food and clothing to her children. She is repaying the loan also in regular monthly instalments.

Conclusion

In the slums, where the poor people in general and women in particular, need a helping hand for support to stand on their own feet, this not only provides economic independence to the concerned people but also develops self-confidence in them to face the reality. As women's earnings are mostly spent on the welfare of the family, more so on children, attempts are being made, of late by various funding agencies to finance the women enterprises programmes. One such attempt has been made by ODA(UK) through MCH/UCD in the slums of Hyderabad by experimenting with the idea of CBL and providing necessary training to women. The success stories have, no doubt, brought into light the fact that women, unlike men, are competent and can navigate the family affairs, specially if they are provided with skill development and the necessary working capital. The prompt repayment is a very important point, that one has to notice.

With these experiences, as backdrop MCH/UCD can do wonders in all other slums and try for developing self-confidence in women to take up the family maintenance independently.

SECTION IV

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN RURAL INDIA AND THE PERCEIVED ROLE OF THE PANCHAYATI RAJ FOR ITS REMOVAL

Abhaya Charan Jena
and
Bharati Mukherjee

Introduction

Panchayati Raj system as introduced in India has been taken to be one of the most expedient tools for translating the abstract idea of democracy in a reality through a conscious and planned devolution of power from higher to lower levels in such a way that the existence of the democratic polity may be felt not merely at the top but also at the foundation levels of the political pyramid. The main objectives in introducing the system in India, as envisaged by both the Mehta Committees, are to take democracy to the masses at the grass root by creating self-governing institutions with local autonomy to serve as schools of democratic decentralization at the remotest villages in this vast country and to link up those rural units with the units of the higher government. Panchayati Raj aims at bringing millions into the functioning of the representative government so that each one even at the lowest level may feel himself indispensable to the system and therefore be induced to devote his best for the nation's growth. Panchayati Raj institutions, therefore, may serve as building blocks in the developmental process of the nation.

In whatever developmental stage a society is, growth, progress and stability depend, to a large extent, upon the participation of its human components. To ensure maximum participation, there must be clear perception as to the social roles of such members and the concurrence of the society in the performance of their perceived roles. For this again the institutional locus lies in the society itself in creating and nurturing an environment charged by democratic

values like freedom, equity, equality and social justice to be shared by all such members. Denial of such an environment to any section impairs the momentum of social progress.

The society might be under the process of growth, but it would be a limping society. To quote Tagore, "The person whom you force down under, shall chain you underneath; the person who is left behind will pull you backwards." This is more true of a developing society like India which is typically traditional and stratified in terms of innumerable criteria, putting a large section of populace under varying forms of differentiation and deprivation. The most profound and pervading of all such discriminations which cuts across all 'varna', 'dharma' and culture models in India is that practised against its womenfolk. Of them again, rural women are the worst sufferers. They constitute half of the society, and if they cannot take an equal stride with the other half, the expected advancement of the society can never be achieved. It is in this case that the Panchayati Raj can play a significant role by creating conditions which would generate an egalitarian environment leading to an inculcation of the democratic values which would bring the rural women-folk into the national developmental mainstream. This article aims at a theoretical exposition and identification of some of the major constraints which following from sex inequality perception, stand as a stumbling block in the process of effective role played by rural women. The removal of these obstacles should be included in the basic programmes of Panchayati Raj system if it sincerely aspires to implement democracy at the grass-root level.

Discrimination as a Form of Oppression

Discrimination as a form of oppression of women is not a new phenomenon. It has its origin, as Engels pointed out, with the origin of family, private property and sexual division of labour.¹ Man desired to have permanent possession of woman as his personal property regardless of her choice or refusal. Thus "Woman was the first human-being that tasted

1. Frederick Engels, *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*

bondage. Woman was a slave before the slave existed."²

Discrimination against woman is based upon the notion of her sex-inferiority which is a convenient innovation of patriarchal society. Its genesis, as supported by biological and anthropological theories, is to be tracked back to the primitive days when woman, during pregnancy and first few months after childbirth, had to depend on man for bare subsistence.

Patriarchal societies cleverly exploited this temporary weakness of woman and linked the social system with the belief that woman by nature was dependent and therefore subordinate to man. Henceforth woman was perceived as a commodity which man might use in any way he liked. Such treatment was backed up by religion which was characteristically male-dominated. Christianity preaches that as woman was created from the rib of man, she shall have to remain subordinate to man always. St Paul wrote, "Just as Christ is the Lord of every man, so also man is the Lord of every woman." The Quran dictates, "Men are a degree about them (Women)" and "Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one of them to excel the others." (II.228, IV. 34). In Rig-Veda only women rishis like Apala, Bech, Ghosa, Biswabara, Lopamudra, etc. were taken to be equal to men. But in the later Vedic period, women were considered as gateway of hell, as a curse (Taittirya Brahmana, 6.3.7.13). Manusamhita gave a mandate that a woman was needed only to give birth to sons and maintain the lineage.³ Discriminative attitude against women was entrenched in feudal and capitalist values. The root cause of discrimination is essentially economic. Many socio-cultural variables dependent on the economic factor developed in the course of history, and quite a few of them have contributed and still do so, to the sex-inequality conception. Hence the economic factor is primordial. This may be viewed as economic reductionism. But this influence would be found true if one analyses the position of woman in Indian society.

Indian Constitution and Sex Equality

Historically women in India suffered through millennia due to traditional social arrangement. After Independence the Constitution recognized sex-equality principle implicitly in the Preamble and explicitly in Articles 14 to 16 of the Fundamental Rights Chapter and Article 39 of the Directives. It was, therefore, expected that the accumulated backlog would be obviated and women would be able to move on an equal pace with their male counterparts. The collaborated efforts of men and women would quicken India's development. But there are gaps between constitutional promises and social actualities. Feudal and semi-feudal forces are still powerful and they are compounded with bourgeois hegemony. So sex-discrimination looms large even today and the worst targets are the women of the rural areas.

Villages: The Hub of Development

Villages are the laying-in-rooms of India's civilization. About 80 per cent of Indian population lives in the villages. India's economy and social cultural heritage are primarily village based. In fact villages in India constitute the hub around which rotates the nation's developmental activities. It is from the villages that the rest of India gains its vitality. Total involvement of the villages in the developmental process is therefore a prime requisite particularly when the nation is at its take-off-stage. But in such a process it is a crude reality that rural women are denied their appropriate place because of the deep-rooted discriminative attitude of the society.

Cause of Sex-differentiation, Position of Urban and Rural Women

To an unbiased observer, the root cause of crude sex-differentiation in rural areas lies in abysmal poverty which flows from profound illiteracy, blind superstitions and prejudices, the characteristics of a traditional society. But it is interesting to note that illiteracy, prejudices, traditional values pattern and indifference to modernity in their turn are

produced by poverty. Thus a vicious circle goes on whereby poverty gets magnified in the rural scene. However, it does not mean that poverty has been altogether eradicated from urban areas. It is the day-to-day companion for many of the urban dwellers. But its edges have become somewhat blunt due to growing industrialization, westernization, inculcation of modern values and more so because of faster and more encompassing spread of education. Due to easily available infrastructural facilities and relatively modern outlook of the loosely knit heterogeneous society, urban women can now equip themselves with job-oriented education or training for entrepreneurship which have ushered in economic independence for them to some extent. In addition to this, due to vigilant activities of political parties (which are mostly urban-centered and consider women as their vote banks) and other voluntary organizations including women's organizations, closer exposure to mass media, opportunity to cross-cultural interactions, national as well as international, some form of egalitarian philosophy is gradually taking shape and traditional approaches are changing fast. Women in urban areas can assert their position in the family and society as in most cases they are not creating financial burden on the family. On the contrary, both as daughter and wife they are gradually sharing economic responsibilities as income-earners. Urban men fold grudgingly or ungrudgingly have accepted the modern profile of their partners. That is why in the matrimonial advertisements of dailies seeking suitable brides, the demand for qualities such as beauty and expertise in domestic activities in prospective brides is giving way to economic capability.

In rural areas the picture is remarkably different. Villages in India represent the traditional social sub-structure on which modern super-structure of polity and economy have been built up. Group life in villages is homogeneous and based on primary face-to-face relationship, society is tremendously hierarchical; caste, community and religion are the controlling forces; traditional beliefs and superstitions are still the supreme factors which regulate the entire life-process of individuals. Vertical as well as horizontal stratification in the social structure, illiteracy, bigotry, unhealthy and competitive market economy and consumerism have plunged most of the Indian villages into

unfathomable poverty. Defective economic policies and absence of adequate educational and modernization facilities lead to poverty multiplication. Finding no way to be rescued from such a suffocating situation rural people resuscitate their age-old beliefs and traditional value-patterns. As a result, the issue of man-woman relationship is settled in favour of the former. Man is at the pinnacle, he is the final decision-maker both in the family and society; woman's role is marginal and she is pushed to the bottom of the social pyramid. She is just an object of pleasure for the man, the biological progenitress of the man's line and a source of free labour for the family. She is expected to be humble and meek, confined exclusively to the household affairs and to leave everything else to the lords of the family as their exclusive domain. Slight departure from such prefixed role would stamp her as destroyer of family happiness and social balance. Marginal disruption of man's vested interest by a woman often marks the 'rebel' as a witch. Reports of witch-burning from villages are frequent, wizard-hunting is not a known phenomenon.

The wretched condition of the Indian rural women would be clear from some information supplied by the National Perspective Plan (NPP) for women prepared by the Government of India. According to the NPP report, about 75 per cent of the Indian women are totally illiterate. Of them a large majority is from rural areas. Of the educated women, most belong to urban areas⁴ because of locally available infrastructures, less poverty and increasing social expectations from them. Education is from in rural areas also, at least in primary state. But poverty is at the doorstep to intervene. According to the NPP Report, of the total 33.1 crores of women, more than 24 crores are poorest among the poor and majority of them in rural areas are below poverty line. So both the parents have to work outside. The family can at best afford to send the boy child to school for first few years, the girl child has to act as baby-sitter or to support the family by any means, for example, by collecting fuels, cattlefeed, or grazing cows and goats. Sometimes for want of clothing to cover their body, girls cannot attend school. Percentage of drop-outs among girl-students, therefore, varies between 60 and 80. The Report further describes in

detail what tremendous physical strain the rural women have to undertake to fetch drinking water, to collect fuel and cattlefeed. In states like Rajasthan in dry areas women including minors have often to walk 15 to 20 km a day to fetch drinking water. NPP also gives the information that as it is in practice no woman in rural areas can own land or obtain loans from financial institutions. There are ample instances where about 30 to 35 per cent of the rural females are to shoulder entire family responsibility due to desertion or torture by their husbands.⁵ Surveys conducted by international bodies show that mothers' death rate during childbirth is very high in rural areas. Child mortality is also high in rural areas and it is still higher among the girl children. Experts are of the opinion that this is mainly due to malnutrition and lack of adequate care both parental as well as medical. The trend has been reflected in the Census Reports. In the 1981 Census, there were 934 females per 1000 males. But in 1991 Census, the number of former has declined to 929. Various other similar informations in the NPP and in other documented reports present a profile of an average Indian rural woman, which is abominably degraded and deprived even by minimum human standard. But curiously enough, deprivation through centuries perhaps has paralysed their feeling of deprivation for which in most cases they make themselves prisoners of obscurant ideas and complexes. They remain voiceless and unprotesting and accept masculine superiority and their own indignity as prefixed by destiny. Such a depressing social framework together with the peculiar attitude structure of both sexes is not congenial to the development of the latent potentialities of rural women and to bring out their best for effective social participation.

Outlook of the Society Towards Male Child and Female Child

'That poverty and a sense of economic insecurity are the propelling forces for generating sex discrimination in favour of the male is revealed from the outlook of the family and

society towards a male child *vis à vis* a female child. With the joint family system vanishing and in the absence of adequate social security measures, a son in the rural family is still regarded as the only support for parents in their old age, but a daughter is a burden. Such an attitude is supplemented by the blind superstition that a son rescues the parents from the sufferings of hell, but a daughter does not. She is to be reared up to supply labour and produce male children for another family. So the best food, best education, best medical care available to the family are for the boy, the daughter is to live on the leftovers of her brother. A glaring example of discrimination between a male-child and a female-child was reported in *Ananda Bazar Patrika*.⁶ In the district of Aurangabad at the village named Vid, Baburao and Sumitra Andula sacrificed their new born daughter to a deity on the fulfilment of their prayer to have children. It was further revealed that two years ago they had a son. But son could not be spared for sacrifice. The birth of a daughter solved their problem.

Girls are Regarded as Burden Because of Dowry System

Girls are regarded as burden to the rural family due to another important reason. It is the large dowry, demanded by the groom's side. In urban areas marriage is not a must for a girl. But in villages if they are not given in marriage within the socially approved period (which is often lower than the legally permissible age), the family becomes a target of social ostracism. Sandwiched between social pressure and dowry obligation, poor rural parents often become paupers to get their daughter married. Though, Anti-dowry Act has been passed, hardly any efforts are visible on the part of the society to implement it. Moreover, poor illiterate rural people are not even in a position to know what exact remedies are available to them under the Act.

Female Infanticide and Child Marriages

As daughters are regarded as financially burdensome, to get rid of them female infanticide is a socially approved practice in most parts of rural India. Recently, in a TV serial, the brutal practice of killing newborn girl child by applying

'ammal' (opium) by her mother herself had been screened. To relieve parents from dowry obligation resort to suicide by three sisters together had been witnessed by free India in 1990. To escape from high dowry demands poor parents in rural areas often give their daughters in marriage even before they are physically and mentally fit. Child Marriage Restraint Act, Age of Consent Act, etc, are there, but have no relevance to the poor and illiterate people who live in the remote villages in the iron grip of traditional social system. Thus it is poverty and social pressure that makes 11 year old Amina of Hyderabad the bride of a 60-year-old Arab Sheikh.

Domestic Violence Against Women

Financial demands from the groom's side often continue even after solemnization of marriage which may even take various forms of domestic violence; from bride beating to bride burning. In urban areas such cases are not rare, but victims can fight against such violence as they are better equipped and can face the problem in an organized way. Rural girl cannot even go to the courts to ask for divorce and alimony. It is because:

- (i) they have recourse or no knowledge of legal redress;
- (ii) to take recourse to legal measures requires large sums of money in the prolonged process which their parental family cannot afford; and
- (iii) deserted or divorced women cannot be socially rehabilitated in the feudal class-structure of a rural society. Such poor creatures cannot come back to their parental families which are unable to maintain their married daughters because of financial handicap. In spite of all ignominy and oppression they are to stay in their in laws' house under continuous threat of violence and death.

Within the first ten months of the number of reported dowry deaths was 2,448 and about 13,000 women became victims of domestic violence.⁷

Poverty and Immoral Traffic in Women

as devadasis to temples, as bonded labour to *jotdars*, as wage-labour to *sarars* to work in plantation or mining areas. Hoodwinking the prohibition of Immoral Traffic on Women Act, India has flourishing business of 'flesh trade' where most of the victims are innocent, illiterate, stupid village girls who could be easily caught in the trap.

Condition of the Women of Weaker Section

Oppression of women also takes the form of economic repression. Poor women of the villages, particularly those of the backward classes, Scheduled Castes and Tribes constitute a substantive labour force in the country. They work as labourers in agriculture, in brick-fields, in manufacturing birl, etc. According to a recent report, in Asian countries 65 per cent of the total labourers engaged in export-oriented industries comprise women. But an interesting point to note is that these rural women get entry into manual, labour-intensive low-paid jobs and are almost debarred from access into the jobs that are elevated, bring fat salary and command authority. It is customary to say that the rural women do not possess superior intellectual qualities required for the high ranking jobs. Here also the remote control instrument is in the hands of man. The academic curriculum is framed by men, which includes home science, needlework, music, etc, only for girls. In urban areas due to keen competition for admission to higher education and limited job opportunities, girls mostly choose subjects similar to boys. In villages traditional attitudes coupled with poverty have taken such deep roots that most of the few girls who get the chance to study at all, cannot think of any other career save marriage as their means of subsistence and security. Hence they study home science and other similar subjects which rarely develop their cognitive power, sharpen their intelligence and enrich their thought process. But such qualities are essential for prestigious and lucrative jobs. Thus here also the vicious circle of poverty and economic insecurity together with traditional ideas operate to keep rural women backward.

Economic Exploitation of Women

Economic exploitation of women also takes other forms.

Most of the woman workers in villages are engaged in agriculture and cottage industries. With the gradual introduction of higher technology and mechanization in agriculture and cottage industries job opportunities for female workers are gradually shrinking because women have only marginal opportunity to receive adequate technical training. Equal Wages Act is in force in this country. But women workers in rural areas generally get less than their male co-workers. According to a Government Report, women workers in the brick-fields get 20 to 30 per cent less pay than their male colleagues for the same work. Frequent pregnancies and other physical problems do not allow women workers to work continuously. Grinding poverty, therefore, compels the woman workers to agree to work at a cut down rate with a hope to get back their jobs. Thus they are, in Lenin's word, subject to double oppression — as a worker and as a woman. Such economic exploitation of women is a worldwide phenomenon. August Bebel referred to a case in which a woman in Germany was to take the place of a man in a public school, but with half the salary which her predecessor received. Gerda Lenner who is known as the main spokeswoman of feminist movement remarked, "In America women work equal to men in the outer world, but always get less."⁸ Absence of job security makes female workers, particularly of tribal and backward classes in India, targets of various forms of exploitation including sexual harrassment. It has been reported that every year multinational companies in Third World countries retrench about 65,000 woman labourers of thirty plus age-groups on some plea of physical uns fitness. The Indian Constitution forbids hazardous employment for children below 14 years. But abject poverty compels the parents to send their girl children between three and nine of age group to glass-bangle industries in Moradabad, pearl collection in Malabar coast of Kerala, fireworks and safety matches factories in small villages of Tamil Nadu. Girls are specially suitable for such industries because they can be employed at very cheap rates and these industries are so dangerous that every year a good number of casualties is reported. The traditional idea is, girls are expendable.

Laws and Women

Poverty and illiteracy deny rural women justice from the law courts. After independence many laws had been passed to reduce discrimination against women. But these are the laws on paper only for a vulnerable section of population living in far-flung rural areas, particularly as they are complicated, full of loopholes and justice is expensive and dilatory. Law-makers and judges in most cases are males. The bias of our courts against women has been brought to light more than once. In *Gaya Prasad vs. Bhagwati*⁹ courts betrayed their preference for traditionally inferior status of Hindu women. In spite of constitutional promise of uniform Civil code (Article 44), even after 46 years of independence personal laws based on religions of different communities are still continuing. The passing of the Muslim Women (Protection and Maintenance on Divorce) Act, 1986 is an example of politicking with religion at the cost of women's dignity by the elected leaders of the nation. What is more, when a Chief Justice of India advises women not to come out to the outer world to compete with men, the magnitude of sex discrimination can easily be gauged and any legal promise of gender justice turns delusive.

This discussion clearly shows that Indian society and polity have miserably failed to bring rural women into the developmental mainstream. Sex discrimination against them leads to a tremendous wastage of social force if we remember that human power is the most important resource for social productivity.

The present writers agree with E.M.S. Namboodiripad, who held that with the emergence of socialism and finally communism under the leadership of a new generation, man-woman equation in India will be fully realized. But the pressing need of the moment is to find out what can be done within the existing framework.

It is not of any practical gain merely to recognize or even disapprove of such discriminatory practices. Enough of theoretical deliberations and writing of articles have been made. International Women's Decade has been celebrated. The SAARC countries have expressed concern over Asian

9. AIR 1966, MP, 212, 214.

women's exploitation. 1991 which was declared as International Girl Child Year has gone. But how far has mankind advanced in eradicating such an evil in the practical world? What is needed now is not erudite theoretical discussion, but some conscious action to change the scenario.

Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Women Development

It is in this respect that the Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs) are found expedient. They are the only units of democratic polity that are vested with legitimate decision-making power, initiative and authority in the rural areas. They are, as conceived by the Balwantrai Mehta Committee, the institutions for development with decentralized administration and voluntary participation. They can serve as very effective means to start the 'action' against sex discrimination by creating conditions which would lead to a cooperative commonwealth assuring social and economic justice to the hitherto neglected rural masses.

The Panchayati Raj institutions in our country have got a good coverage and the statistics relating to their distribution are fairly impressive. All the states and union territories have opted for these bodies. The population covered by these bodies is about 99.6 per cent of total rural population. So the PRIs are in close touch with the masses at the grass root, and are imbued with sublime democratic ideal. They project themselves as an integrated system of political socialization, communication and mobilization both of political and social economic development. Therefore, it can be reasonably expected that in a society, such as ours, with wide economic disparities and social discrimination, they can sow the seeds of greater democratic participation. So they are perceived as the best agencies to bring about a revolution in the mental make-up of the rural masses, so that they would realize the necessity to create a new society.

This new society would allow each and every member to live and work with self-reliance and dignity, with a fearless mind and a soul free from all inhibitions. Since poverty with its accompanying vices lies at the root of all discrimination in rural society, the Panchayati Raj institutions should strive for reduction, if not eradication of poverty at the rural

level. This can be done by redefining and revitalizing their existing programmes and also by evolving and undertaking suitable new programmes. In the latter case, if there be any structural or legal obstruction, it is to be removed by adequate legislation. For such programmes, the target group should comprise not only women, but the total rural society; betterment of women cannot be treated as an isolated phenomenon; it is a necessity for betterment of society, of which woman is a part.

A few suggestions are submitted which may be taken up for consideration by the Panchayati Raj bodies to obviate sex-discrimination and restructure the rural society on an egalitarian philosophy.

First and foremost, Panchayati Raj should undertake a strategy for effective redistribution of resources, and benefits at the operational level. For this, sincere administrative and organizational network is necessary. But what is needed most is appropriate institution building at the local level which would help to generate conviction in democratic values and lessen the empathy of the rural people in feudal norms. To achieve the purpose, it is required to link up village Panchayats with popular organization both at the local level as well as at the higher levels. As envisaged by the planning commission, this will lead to a reconstitution of bodies, set up at the local levels and would take over the entire general administrative and developmental work of the district barring such functions as maintenance of law and order, administration of justice and the like.¹⁰

For eradication of poverty, the Panchayati Raj institutions should accelerate land reforms. Oppression of women is associated with feudal values. Such values in the modern context are sustained in rural landholding by Kulaks. PRIs should play a meaningful role in distributing excess lands of the *jotdars/kulaks* as well as vested lands to the landless agricultural labourers or marginal agriculturists. Since in the rural areas everybody knows each other, given the will and courage, prevention and recovery of *benami* transfers are easy for the PR agencies. This will prevent concentration

10 Indian Planning Commission, Committee on Plan Projects, Report of the Team for the Study of Community Projects and National Extension Service (Chairman Balwantrai G. Mehta), New Delhi, 1957, Vol. 1.

of land in few hands and larger sections of the rural population will be benefited. The subsequent financial benefits of agricultural production will bring a relief to the poverty-striken family which ultimately will lead to an improvement in the position of woman in the family and hence in the society. Until now, *patta* is not issued in joint names of husband and wife. But such joint arrangement is necessary so that the husband will not be able to deprive his wife or to ignore her position and property in the family. Also in case of death of husband the widow will continue to enjoy the *patta* without fear. If there be any legal snag anywhere, the Zilla Parishad which is a coordinating body between the Panchayati Raj system and the state government and advises the state government for the implementation of the developmental schemes, should take up the matter with the state government for necessary legal endorsement. West Bengal Government's land reform measures, 'Operation Barga' in particular, may serve as a model.

With a similar objective existing NREP (National Rural Employment Programme) and RLEGP (Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme) now called JRY should be properly implemented so that they can create more work-days which may provide work to more men and women. The provision of equal wage will reduce the indignity of women.

Panchayati Raj institutions should undertake schemes that would help rural women to be economically self-sufficient. With a huge backlog of registered unemployed, it would be expedient for the rural women to look for self-employment. During the International Women's Decade (1975-85) in 1980 an all-party committee convened by the Central Government submitted 19 recommendations for improving women's position. The ninth one was a proposal to reserve jobs of all categories for women. One of the members of the Committee, Smt Sushila Gopalan disagreed with the proposal and offered an alternative suggestion that there should be provisions for financial allocations in the central and state budgets to assist women entrepreneurs. Had the proposal been accepted, it could have created an opening for women including rural. Such a programme may be undertaken by the Panchayats if the state planning is decentralized. That is to say, planning at the block level should form the basis of district planning which in turn

should be treated as the basis for state planning. In that case proposals for financial and technical allocation for women entrepreneurs can originate at the block as a part of its developmental functioning and may be formally incorporated in the State Plan to enable it to receive plan assistance.

Rural women traditionally practise certain economic activities independently, like sewing, mat-knitting, preparing *baris* (small balls made out of ground pulse paste) *papads* or pickles, making cane baskets, stitching *kanthas* (cotton wrapper), etc. But these activities alone cannot bring economic self-sufficiency to rural women. Why cannot they think of building up of small industries like handloom and power loom, coir industry, carpentry, furniture making, type of foundry, lathe machine products, etc? For implementing such projects financial assistance is necessary. Nowadays loans from financial institutions are available for self-employment projects. But loan facilities are more open to the urban people and are inadequate even for rural men, not to speak of women. The Zilla Sabhadhipati as the Chairman of DRDA (District Rural Development Agency) which is actively associated with loan distributing agencies, and the Gram Panchayat and Panchayat Samiti, through IRDP Sub-Committee (Integrated Rural Development Programme), may effectively assist rural people in obtaining loans from banks or other similar agencies. In doing so, they may follow some objective criteria, not subjective judgement, so as to remove existing imbalance in the distribution of loan facilities among menfolk and womenfolk. PRIs would be of immense help for the rural women entrepreneurs if they can arrange for vocational and technological training necessary for undertaking such projects.

A positive duty of the Panchayats is to generate an egalitarian attitude among the rural people which forms the basis of democratic decentralization. For this purpose, the Panchayats can give an effective lead by organizing visits by educationists, social planners, social workers, social scientists, representatives of religious denominations and reporters from mass media. A concerted efforts by all these people through door to door publicity and mass meetings and seminars, organization of cultural programmes, fairs, and exhibitions by the Panchayats may educate local people and motivate them to shake off their age-old bondage of

superstitions and traditional values. Thus rural people both men and women will realize that men and women are two wheels of the same chariot and if one of the wheels is weak, the chariot cannot move, however strong the other wheel may be.

One point, however, to be taken care of is that PRIs theoretically are indirect, at all stages. But in actual practice, they are dominated by economically and socially privileged sections. An oligarchic control by the rural elite is exercised by locally dominated groups like big landowners or kulaks, moneylenders, local merchants, manufacturers, etc. They are the groups who could gain most if they can use Panchayat activities to their benefit (like road construction, sinking of tubewells, irrigation, etc.).

This is possible only when they have a legitimate control over the PR bodies. Poor and innocent villagers are traditionally dependent upon such groups in many ways. At the time of election they cannot shake off their dependence for fear of reprisals. So usually, they cast their votes as dictated by the local influentials. Women in the rural areas, because of their crippled personality, generally exercise their franchise according to the instruction of their male guardians. As a result Panchayats in many cases do not truly represent the local people and the common interest. Such Panchayats cannot be expected to fight out discriminations of any category, rather, they become instruments to enhance differentiation. At present women's participation as members of Panchayats is meagre. Even in a progressive State like West Bengal, less than 10 per cent of the total Panchayat members are women. Table 1 illustrates the point.

TABLE I
ELECTION RESULTS OF THE THIRD PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS
(1988) IN WEST BENGAL (EXCEPT DARJEELING DISTRICT)

	Total Number of Panchayats	Total Number of Elected Members	Total Number of Women Members
Gram Panchayat	3,227	52,520	5,705
Panchayat Samiti	329	9,127	470
Zilla Parishad	15	658	24

In the absence of fair representation of rural womenfolk in the Panchayats, it cannot be expected that male-dominated forums would uphold their cause. Even when the male members are sympathetic, they fail to appreciate the causes of women as a woman could do. There is a proposal to reserve 30 per cent of Panchayat seats for women. Constitution 72nd Amendment Bill prescribes 33 per cent of reservation for women, it will be applicable in ensuring elections in the states. In all states except Punjab and Tamil Nadu, where no woman representative has been elected to the Panchayats, there is obligatory provision for nomination of a few female members. But reservation and nomination both are humiliating for women.

The Santhanam Committee on Panchayati Raj Elections (1965) observed that all members of the Panchayats including representatives of women should be elected¹¹. The Vyas Committee very correctly observed that co-option in fact is nothing but a corrosion and infringement of true democratic process and the representatives of women getting a place through co-option in PRIs is nothing but a creation of the generosity of the male members of these bodies having vested interests. Consequently the participation of women in the deliberations of such bodies is far from active or objective¹².

Therefore, increase in political consciousness among the rural women is necessary so that when elected as equal members of the Panchayat they can assert the appropriately rightful position of women in the rural society. Political parties and women's organizations have to play more positive role in organizing rural women for ensuring their effective participation. In fact rural people, irrespective of whether they are men or women have to be motivated to make their Panchayats true representatives of their social and economic aspirations.

Conclusion

It may be concluded that the PRIs cannot and should not deny responsibility for the implementation of perfect sex-equality principle as enshrined in our Constitution. Rather, it is for the Panchayats to deliver our society from the traditional mores where sex-discrimination is fostered by poverty, religious bigotry and feudal exploitative culture. Nature has given equal rights and responsibilities to men and women. While the women are continuously suppressed and denied their legitimate share in society their deprivation is compounded with various other discriminations extant in this country of 4,599 communities speaking 325 languages and dialects and writing in 24 scripts (*lipis*).¹³ where even a man discriminates against another man. All these have made India a tremendously exploitative society.

Setting aside other cases of deprivation, it is a reality that rural women are special objects of oppressive discrimination as they are women. Such discrimination not only hurts them, but it is damaging to the society as well. PRIs, to fulfil their much expected role in democratic decentralization, should serve as the friend, philosopher and guide to the rural people so as to enthuse them to restructure their society on the basis of democratic and egalitarian principles. Such a society would break the vicious circle of rural poverty and with thorough economic upliftment would confer a modern rational and analytical attitude, self-confidence and self-respect both to the rural women and to their male counterparts. When the societal stage is ready to recognize them as equally human as man, successful role-acceptance and role performance on the part of the rural women would be possible as wives, daughters, mothers as well as important growth-agents of the nation at the grass root.

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WOMEN IN PANCHAYATI RAJ BODIES

Shift from Peripheral to Leadership Roles

K. Manikyamba

The system of Panchayati Raj in India, after passing through the phases of ascendance, stagnation and decline, has now entered the phase of resurrection and revitalization. The system has, to its credit, achievements like increasing the consciousness and awareness of rural people, providing for a uniform pattern of infrastructure to implement rural development programmes, facilitating a distinct shift in the social composition of Panchayati Raj leadership and 'generating a new leadership which is not merely relatively young in age but also modernistic and pro-social change in outlook.' Interestingly, the system has generated a new and young women's membership as well as leadership in Panchayati Raj institutions.

This article proposes to discuss the aspirations of the founders of Panchayati Raj in the context of women's membership and leadership in Panchayati Raj institutions, the views of the committees appointed by Government of India from time to time in this regard, the changing nature of women's membership in these bodies, the kind of leadership roles of women and the prospects for the future.

From Co-option to 30 per cent Reservation

The founders of Panchayati Raj, desiring that women should not only become beneficiaries of and contributors to development, were particular that women should have representation in the rural political institutions. Accordingly, the Balwantrao Mehta Committee recommended the co-option of two women members and one member each from the Scheduled Castes and Schedules Tribes to Panchayati

Raj bodies.¹ The Ashok Mehta Committee laid special emphasis on the need to strengthen and reorganize women's constructive decision-making and managerial roles. This Committee considered women as the most important part of our population and recommended that a Committee, with all the women members of the Mandal Panchayats represented in it, should be formed so that decisions are made by women members themselves on priorities and choices in welfare and development programmes meant for women and children.² It is clear that this body should be set up at the level of the district to take care of the interests of women and children. The Narasimham Committee recommended that 5 per cent of the posts of sarpanches in each block (a group of villages) should be reserved for women.³

Some important committees appointed by government to study the status of women and to suggest measures for integrating women in the process of development have made specific recommendations for giving key positions to women. The Committee on the status of Women recommended the establishment of statutory Women's Panchayats at the village level as a transitional measure to ensure greater participation by women in the political process.⁴ The core group, set up by the Central Government, in its report of the year 1988 pointed out that political power and access to positions of decision-making and authority are critical prerequisites for women's equality in the process of nation building. The group further felt that 30 per cent of the executive heads of all bodies from village to district level bodies and a certain percentage of chief executives of Panchayati Raj at the lower, middle and higher levels must be reserved for women.⁵ This

group emphasized the point that the co-option of women members to Panchayats has not brought any perceptible impact on women's participation in the Panchayati Raj bodies and that co-option is done only in letter and not in the spirit of getting women involved in Panchayat activities. It suggested the reservation of 30 per cent seats in Panchayati Raj institutions to women.⁶

It is now widely held that participation of women in political process in general and political institutions in particular makes a difference; effective participation depends considerably on the roles assumed; political empowerment of women means not only possessing political rights but also having opportunities for enjoying them and that it is this situation that provides for what could be treated as 'just'. What is required is both qualitative and quantitative improvement in respect of women's membership and leadership positions in the political process. When female population (half of the population) enters into political competition and succeeds, quantitative increase is possible. The intensity of competition would definitely bring about qualitative development. When women have reasonable membership in political positions, the legitimacy of the system gets strengthened. As Ruth B. Mandel pointed out, a balance of sexes in politics facilitates more fairness and equity, more representativeness in experience, interest and outlook and more willingness among more people to share responsibilities for the larger community.⁷

Another significant change is that there is widespread opposition to the inclusion of women as co-opted members in the political bodies because co-option would have negative effect on status. There is an increasing feeling that time has come now to move out of token provision for women's representation to a more meaningful association of women in the structure of local administration.

It is also increasingly felt that, for effective participation, the women should be recruited to key positions in ministries, commissions, executive offices and the like. The level and

nature of performance of role incumbents depends on the positions held and persons holding key positions could play significant roles by directing the whole process of decision-making. Indian women's demand for leadership positions is very clear today and in the context of giving rural women opportunity for increased membership in rural political institutions and for assuming considerable percentage of presidential positions, the Union Government came forward with the 73rd Constitution Amendment.

The Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act

The Constitution 73rd Amendment passed recently by the Indian Parliament and ratified by a majority of the state legislatures is a step towards women's equality. The Act makes it clear that not less than one-third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat shall be reserved for women and such seats should be allotted by rotation by different constituencies in a Panchayat.⁸ Panchayat should be understood here as political institution at the village or intermediate or district level. The Act also ensures representation to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes women because it makes specific mention of the point that not less than one-third of the total number of seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes should be reserved for the women of these castes and tribes. It should be noted that the total number of seats reserved for women should be understood as seats which include those reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes women. The Act further mentions that not less than one-third of the total number of offices of chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level shall be reserved for women. The Act is not clear in respect of reserving chairpositions to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes women.

The provisions of this Act relating to women's representation in Panchayati Raj bodies, if properly implemented would facilitate a due mixture of democratic decentralization, popular participation and gender justice. In this context some questions would emerge. What has been our

experience in the matter of recruiting women to Panchayati Raj institutions — whether by co-option or election or nomination? Could rural women come out of the cultural and environmental constraints to assume effective roles in these bodies? Are there any women who could be regarded as role models? The following discussion would provide answers to these questions.

Recruitment

Until recently, in many states in India, women's representation in Panchayati Raj bodies is ensured by means of co-option. Experience in states has revealed that the application of co-option method resulted in nominal induction of women members and in most cases the participation of these members is minimal. A few examples can be given here. A woman member of a Gram Panchayat told the author that she never knew that she was a member. The only thing that she remembered was that her son, who was the Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat used to ask her to put her thumb impression in a book. A woman member of another Gram Panchayat said that her husband was the Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat of their village and that she was made a member only to support her husband. In another village, two old women working in fields as daily wage-earners were made members of the Gram Panchayat of their village.

These women were not only illiterate but innocent as well as ignorant. This was the general trend in the sixties and in early seventies. This is not to deny the presence of women members who assumed moderately assertive roles though nominally inducted. But such cases were few. In the early years of the inception of Panchayati Raj, there had been instances when contestants to Gram Panchayat membership preferred defeat without women voting than to success with women voting. A woman member of a Samiti told at the time of interview, "We belong to respectable families and do not go out of our houses. I became a member not because myself and my husband are interested, but only because of the fact that my husband is a very close friend of the President whose request that I should be co-opted to the Samiti could not be ignored." Another woman member of the same Samiti said: "The President is the elder brother of my

husband. How can I sit in the meetings along with him? Does it not amount to disrespec*t* to my brother-in-law? Hence I do not attend meetings, but I sign in the register when it is brought to my house". In the early years of the inception of a Samiti in Andhra Pradesh, it became very difficult to enlist women as members because neither did they accept membership nor were men willing to allow women to agree. Hence the Samiti members co-opted two prostitutes as members and later two poor, illiterate child widows and imposed the status of representatives on them.

Available evidence suggests that by the seventies the objections for the entry of women belonging to respectable families got relaxed and the practice of choosing women coming from slightly higher social status to the Panchayati Raj bodies started. A study in Maharashtra points out that women selected to these institutions are fairly progressive in outlook, ready to recognize the demands of a changing social situation and are willing to participate in the socio-economic and political process.⁹

An assessment of the working of the Panchayati Raj in Orissa makes it clear that more than 25,000 members in the 5,263 Gram Panchayats and 314 members in Panchayat Samitis are women. It is important to note that Orissa has been the first state to implement 33 per cent reservation of women in Panchayats. The Orissa Gram Panchayat Act enables women to hold office at all tiers of the Panchayat institutions and there is a provision in the Act which says that if the Sarpanch elected or nominated is not a woman, the office of the Naib-Sarpanch goes to a woman. Similar is the provision in respect of the chair position of Panchayat Samiti.¹⁰

According to one study, though men have not done enough to motivate their spouses to take part in public activities, the sitting female members in Panchayati Raj institutions in West Bengal have shown that they can stand their ground and that if given a chance to prove themselves, they do stand up. Surprisingly, the Left Front Government, whose one of the first initiatives is revitalization and demo-

cratization of political system has not been able to break the strictures of the male-dominated society. This is the complaint of some women in this state.¹¹ Women had 15 per cent of seats till recently in Panchayati Raj institutions in West Bengal. Now reservation of 33 per cent is provided for.

Elections to Zilla Parishads and Corporations in 1992 in Maharashtra indicate that most women who won are from the Congress Party sponsored either by their husbands or by close or distant relatives. Only a handful of women contesting on behalf of Shetkari Sanghatana's Mahila Aghadi and Left parties succeeded. These contestants had progressive and issue-oriented standpoints. But they lacked sponsorship. Surprisingly, none of the contestants from voluntary organizations got elected.¹²

During her fieldwork in 1990 and again in 1992, the author found that definite improvement had taken place in the matter of recruitment of women to Panchayati Raj bodies. It should be mentioned that in 1986 the State of Andhra Pradesh passed a legislation guaranteeing 9 per cent of the total number of offices of chairpersons of Zilla Parishads and presidents of Mandal Praja Parishads to women.¹³ In accordance with the provisions of the Act, two chair positions of Zilla Praja Parishads and of 96 Mandal Praja Parishads were reserved for women during 1987-92. The number of Mandal Praja Parishads headed by women during the period was 99 (96 elected for reserved positions and three for general). Of the 30 respondents, it was found that 76.66 per cent were young and the remaining were middle-aged. Not a single woman president was aged above 50. A majority of the presidents (66.66 per cent) had adequate educational qualifications required for their duties. They had secondary educational qualifications. None of the presidents was illiterate. As regards the nature of contest only one woman was unanimously elected. Of the remaining, 60 per cent and

23.33 per cent faced direct and triangular contest respectively and the rest, that is, 13.33 per cent contested with more than two candidates. The point here is that women contestants went for campaigning along with a large number of women followers. This shows that rural women in Andhra Pradesh are coming out of a social setting in which politics is regarded as an unsavoury game, dirty profession and so unwomanly. Given the limited opportunities for access to political positions and many obstacles, rural women in this state have come forward to assume political roles. A large majority of women presidents entered politics for the first time. A majority of these presidents are young and new leaders. Most of them are drawn from Forward Castes and also from affluent families. But the percentage of women presidents from Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (30 per cent) is not significant and some women of these sections had won over contestants from Forward Castes. It is interesting to note that a good percentage of the women presidents contested with their close relations. It would be useful to illustrate how women got into the presidential positions. Mullangi Gowri, the President of Bikkavole Mandal Praja Parishad in the East Godavari District said that she could contest and become the president on the initiative of her father-in-law. She further said that because the position is reserved for women, she could contest and in the absence of this, her father-in-law who served as the Sarpanch (President) of Bikkavole Gram Panchayat for over 25 years would have contested himself for the Mandal Praja Parishad presidency which she held.¹⁴ Kovvuri Parvati who became the president on self initiative informed her desire initially to her husband, who at the first instance said: "Will you occupy a stage and speak?" But Parvati could convince her husband that her taking part in politics would not come in the way of her role as a housewife and thus could successfully convert him to the idea of her contesting. Her wishes in this regard received the support of all the political leaders.¹⁵ It was the inspiration of the husband that led to the contest of one of the very effective woman presidents, L. Subhadramma of Jammalamadugu Mandal Praja Parishad in Cuddapah

District.¹⁶ M. Amudavalli, President of Pichatur Mandal Praja Parishad in Chittoor district said: "I came to power due to the encouragement of the local leaders and my husband. I used to scold my husband for being in politics. But after I assumed office, I realized that we can do something for the people through participating in politics. But if our effort goes unrecognized, we feel unhappy".¹⁷ "Actually, my political life was very sudden and unexpected. I never expected that I will be in politics. So many of us are new to the field. I was in touch with politics though I was not in picture. I used to go along with my husband who was active in politics. Without reservation, it is difficult to women to come on their own", said Nalini Ram, president, Mandal Praja Parishad, Kuppam in Chittoor district.¹⁸

This analysis would suggest that reservation has been helpful in bringing women to the political forefront.

Performance

One of the factors that should be present for the realization of the goals of any system is the effective performance of roles. In the context of quantitatively limited presence of women, the need for qualitative performance becomes all the more difficult. A macro-level understanding of the role performance would indicate that the position was not very encouraging until recently. In the sixties as well as in the early seventies in Andhra Pradesh the author noticed significant variation between attendance in records and actual attendance. Very often, records were sent to the homes of women members for their signature or thumb impressions. Even among those who attended, the vocal participation was limited. A woman member said: "does it not mean showing disrespect to the Sarpanch if I speak in the meeting." Another woman, who was a member of Panchayat Samiti said: "We belong to respectable families. We do not go to meetings and speak". While this was the general trend, some women were found to be assertive and committed. A woman member of a Panchayat said: "We are elected by the people and for the people. They have given us the respectable position. It is our

duty to save them and keep up the dignity and status of our membership." But with the assumption of leadership positions, some women proved themselves as outstanding participants. It should be mentioned that power gives confidence and helps to develop ability to participate. An active and young woman, Sitamahalakshmi, who became the president of a Gram Panchayat in the sixties, has put forth maximum effort for the development of her village. But she had to face indirect threats from her relations that she would be declared an out-caste. Her father angrily said that he felt ashamed to call her his daughter. She faced serious opposition and challenge which were so intense and acute that position of the Woman Sarpanch became extremely inconvenient. Constant deadlocks in meetings and consequent decision of the government to appoint a special officer led her to surrender office. But now the position is completely changed. To prove this an example can be given. A woman president of a Mandal Praja Parishad was suspended by the government on alleged grounds of improper conduct of elections to the office of Vice-President. But this assertive president challenged the suspension order in the highest court of appeal and got back her position as president. She worked with confidence till the expiration of her tenure in 1992. The president of Kuppani Mandal Praja Parishad, recollecting her services to the constituents said: "N.T. Rama Rao assumed a new scheme where he wanted the people themselves to participate. We took the utmost advantage of this scheme i.e. Telugu Grameena Kranti Pathakam and we encouraged people to participate saying that if you sit comfortably in your house, government programmes cannot reach you and government cannot come to every doorstep. So you have to contribute your mite." Referring to the steps to be taken for the development of women she said: "in places where the progress of women and the facilities to be provided for women are to be discussed, there should be some men also who should realize what women are being deprived of. The suggestions for improvement should come from men also". While discussing her problems she pointed out that if a person takes things easy, everything is fine, but if a person is a committed worker, he has to neglect his home. Further, she said: "The officials are not well versed with information. Sometimes they are not able to answer. During my period of

office, 5 to 6 MDOs were shifted. The officers, in a very soft way just have their own way. When they come to a standing committee, they do not like the idea of being answerable to someone. They just apologetically look at the chairman (at the district level standing committee meetings) and the chairman has to say something to us and he would ask us to be silent if we belong to the same party." At the Mandal meetings, this president was quite confident and could successfully persuade members to arrive at a consensus. She never felt uncomfortable at being the lone woman in the meetings. L. Subhadramma, Janimalamadugu Mandal Praja Parishad President who is also an efficient leader took an equally active role at the Mandal Praja Parishad as well as at the Zilla Parishad levels. Speaking at a meeting of the Zilla Praja Parishad, on 24 August 1991, she said that the Mandals headed by women are neglected and that it is surprising that those who argue in favour of women's development in all fields are doing injustice to women. She demanded an evaluation of the implementation of development programmes in the Mandals where presidents are women.¹⁹

An evaluation report of the Panchayati Raj in Karnataka states that initially, the traditional status of women has had an effect on their functioning as representatives in Zilla Parishads. But during the subsequent visits, the investigators found changes in the participation of women members in meetings. Women were found expressing opinions and the percentage of articulate women increased. A qualitatively improved participation in terms of contents and comments and acquisition of more knowledge were noticed. It is hoped that the participation and performance of women representatives would greatly improve over a period of time.²⁰ At the Mandal level, while the general position is that a majority of women members performance is poor, a small section of women members which included a few SC women are found to be remarkably active participants.

A study in Maharashtra noted that 25 per cent of the respondents are high performers who showed great potential

to work for the improvement of rural women's conditions. These members expressed considerable satisfaction with their membership in Panchayati Raj bodies mainly because of self-confidence and the social awareness they derived from their participation.

The Future

The analysis should not lead one to conclude that there is institutional and participatory revolution in the context of women's place in Panchayati Raj institutions. The point is, a change has come over the rural scene and one could be, without hesitation, optimistic about rural women's role in decision-making. In the recent years rural women have crossed some unwanted barriers and this is a sign of development. Men's attitudes towards women's entry into politics have also changed, though objections to active participation seem to persist. With the assumption of presidential roles, a shift in women's political roles from secondary to primary positions could be noticed. K. Mrinalini, the President of Zilla Praja Parishad, Srikakulam, referring to women's role in political power positions said: "Ladies also can do equally with men, may be more than men. It is not correct to say that ladies cannot do certain things. Since key positions are associated with power, the question of women finding it difficult to get things done does not arise though women do not have as much physical power as men have."²¹ She could successfully perform the role of chairperson by winning the confidence of her colleagues and through reducing the party considerations to the minimum.

An understanding of the situation in the right perspective and an optimistic assessment would definitely point out the possibility of a better tomorrow for rural women. Trends of quantitative and qualitative development are very much evident. It is these trends that should be strengthened. Women with ability and talent should be made to come to the forefront. Certain trends which are definitely unhealthy should be dispensed with. One such unhealthy trend is that either the husband or son, unable to contest because of the reservation of position for women, indirectly gets into de-

facto roles by nominally inducting the wife or mother as the case may be. The result is, the woman, who gets elected under such circumstances, would only remain as a nominal role incumbent. Such trends should not only be morally condemned but should also be dealt with by appropriate mechanisms. Another discouraging trend is the misuse of certain provisions of the Acts. For instance, Provision 20 of the Andhra Pradesh Mandal Praja Parishads Act says that the president of a Mandal Praja Parishad, for consultation, may invite any person other than an office bearer of any political party, having experience and specialized knowledge of any subject under the consideration of the Mandal Praja Parishad to attend the meeting. In some of the Mandal Praja Parishads presided over by women, their husbands persuaded them to invoke the above provision, managed to get into these bodies as special invitees for every meeting and further managed to preside over the meetings themselves. This kind of practices should strongly be objected to, especially by women.

Under representation of women in all fields of social activity, as some American analysts pointed out symbolizes the failure of the society to provide equality of opportunity for all citizens. Women office holders can make government more sensitive to the special concerns of women, without ignoring those of the community. There does exist a marked difference between women being outsiders and men being insiders in political offices.²² To realize the goals of integrating women in the working of Panchayati Raj, it is necessary to educate women about the need for participation, make careful selection of women members, and to give training to elected women representatives. Implementation of legislation in its true spirit and efforts for greater psychological transformation in favour of active political involvement are also important.

WOMEN AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN INDIA

K. Jayalakshmi

The Indian Constitution empowers the State by Article 15(3) to make any 'special provision for women and children' even in violation of the fundamental obligations of non-discrimination among citizens, *inter alia* of sex. In view of this provision, reservation of seats for women in local bodies or educational institutions has been held to be valid. Similarly, the Directive Principles of State policy also has provision, [Articles 39 (a); 39(d); 39(c) and Article 42] and some of them concern women directly and have a special bearing on their status.¹

In this article an attempt is made to analyse the role played by women in the freedom struggle; after independence their level of participation at national and state levels and lastly the recent efforts to accelerate their participation in the Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs) that is, local bodies at the district, block and village level. After 1975, receptivity to women's issues arose and they have been recognized both by the government and the political parties especially in the third world countries, with India being no exception. Seldom are women seen as political actors. Although, the role of Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister in Indian politics is considered important yet nothing constructive was visualized to empower the women. After independence in 1947, myriad problems had to be tackled and hardly any thought was given to their role and contribution even in the planning process. In 1974, the committee on the status of women was set up, which had a broad canvas covering aspects pertaining to women's development. Almost after a decade, in 1986 the commission on self-employed women had put forth its findings about women in the unorganized sector. In a couple

of years, in 1988, the National Perspective Plan for women laid special emphasis on political participation. 'In order to increase the level of representation of women in legislatures and other administrative bodies and positions of power, certain steps appear necessary as a transitional measure. Reservation of seats for jobs is one such step till such time when more women are able to avail of educational and job opportunities on an equal footing with men.² Prior to this, the state of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh had reserved 25 and nine per cent of the seats for women in the local bodies. Currently, efforts are on to tap the vast human resource in both organized and unorganized sector.

A National Commission on Women was set up in 1922 for effective participation of women. Women's participation in Indian political scene dates way back to the freedom movement from 1880 to 1930; over a period of 50 years, several women's associations across the country were formed and this paved the way for women's movement. The main objective of these associations was to improve the position of women and help in national development. They were fairly influenced by the teachings of social reformers. Conventionally, women find it easier to participate in unconventional politics rather than in formalized institutions. This has a definite impact by making them politically strong.

Participation of Women in the Freedom Movement

The existing literature available highlights that women's participation in public activities can be divided into four phases: (i) Swadeshi movement (1904-1911); (ii) Non-cooperation (1918-1923), (iii) Civil disobedience (1930-1934), and (iv) Quit India Movement (1942). In order to understand the emergence of women's movement, one has to analyse India's social, religious, and political associations in depth. There was a strong correlation between the two. These movements were represented by the high-caste Hindus in a large number, along with the other major religious communities. The high-caste Hindus were exposed to Western

2. National Perspective Plan for Women, 1988-2000 A.D. Recommendations. Indian Institute of Public Opinion Vol. XXX No. 1, p. IX, August 1988.

liberal education and two issues were of prime importance. These were the main factors motivating their action as their power and wealth grew: (1) how to justify ascendancy and (2) how to create a new cultural identity.³ The urban educated made attempts to justify their position, social leadership to the British rulers above them, to the lower castes below them, and to the traditional notables — large landlords and orthodox religious leaders.⁴ They demanded greater political power because of their enlightened local leadership.

Several writers have categorized the ideologies and associations established by the educated urban elite in a variety of ways. Associational politics have been conceptualized along two dimensions — organization and consciousness. The organizational dimensions concern the nature and purpose of the associations and can be represented as follows.⁵ (Table 1)

TABLE I
ORGANIZATIONAL DIMENSION CONCERNING ASSOCIATION

Organizational Dimension	Interest	Association / Institution
Elite representation	Represent elite interest to British authorities	19th century political, social religious reform associations
Broader membership of educated elites elite sub-contractors or political brokers	Mobilize masses but not always control the campaigns once underway	Indian National Congress.
Non-elites, workers peasants, untouchables.	Mobilize caste and class solidarities	To improve group status in society

3 John H Broomfield, "The Regional Elites A theory of Modern Indian History," In Thomas R Metcalf, (ed) *Modern India an Interpretive Anthology*, Macmillan London, pp 60-72, 1971

4 Jana Matson Everett, *Women and Social change in India*. Heritage, New Delhi, pp 45, 1979

5 Lloyd and Susane Rudolph, *The Modernity of Tradition*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp 15-154, 1967

The consciousness dimension concerns values held by participants in associational politics and the way these values are held. This dimension can be represented as follows⁶ (Table 2).

**TABLE 2
CONSCIOUSNESS DIMENSION CONCERNING VALUES**

Assimilationist —	Unquestioned acceptance of Indian or Western values
Reformist —	Critical stance toward current Indian beliefs and practices, but advocates change through the introduction of elements of western culture
Revivalist —	Critical stance toward current Indian beliefs and practices, but advocates change through a return to older Indian traditions
Traditionalist —	Unquestioned acceptance of Indian or Western values, defensive posture toward Indian traditions
Traditional --	Unquestioned acceptance of Indian values

The consciousness dimension played a major role only among the members of the educated elite. These views hardly percolated to the other sections of the society. Charles Heimsath points out that the English education acquired by the elite aught that social practices should be based on reason instead of tradition.⁷ The Brahmo Samaj and Prarthana Samaj made efforts to improve the status of women. They encouraged public participation of women, in Ilbert Bill, and Hunter Commission on Education. The origin of the Indian women's movement in elite associational politics of the late 19th and early 20th centuries shaped the Indian women's movement in many important ways. Four characteristics reflecting the circumstances of origin can be identified : (i) male direction; (ii) a concept of complementary sex role;

(iii) absence of a radical onslaught on patriarchal base of Indian culture; and (iv) orientation toward elite representation and not mass mobilization. These characteristics reduced opposition to the Indian women's movement, but they also limited the improvement in the status of women that the Indian Women's Movement could achieve.⁸

The Indian women's movement and its participation was restricted to the middle and upper classes of women with leisure. This led to elite representation and not toward mass mobilization. There was an elite mass gap. The same trend continued even after independence in 1947. Table 3 gives the performance of women in elections to Lok Sabha.

By and large women from the upper and middle class and elite sections contested in the elections. They were fairly acquainted with political movements as their family members were actively associated either with current politics or the freedom movement. The two major factors which were instrumental in bringing about this recognition of politico-legal equality of women were: (a) Women's participation in the national movement; and (b) Gandhiji's vision that women

must play an equal and important role in the task of national reconstruction.⁹ Compared to the composition of the first legislature, successive legislatures are more representative and less elitist. Many are not barristers and advocates but represent the landed aristocracy and do not represent the masses in the rural areas. Similarly women members also represent the educationally, economically and socially the better-off sections of the society. The Table 4 gives the distribution of women members.

TABLE 4
PRIOR OCCUPATION OF WOMEN MEMBERS IN THE
SEVENTH LOK SABHA

Prior Occupation	Number of Members	Percentage to Total
Agriculturists	11	39.3
Political and social workers	13	46.4
Teachers and educationists	3	10.7
Civil service	1	3.6
Total:	28	100.0

Source: The Seventh Lok Sabha 1980-84, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, p. 16.

Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya, a long time women's leader, delivered a stinging critique of women politicians in 1971: 'Women in public life have obviously stayed away from their base, broken their links with the women at large. For no attempt is made by them to rally and purposefully organize public opinion on vital issues, there has been too great a tendency on the part of these women to try to acquire positions of power...imitate political bosses.'¹⁰

There does not seem to be any correlation between literacy and entry into politics. States having very low literacy rates were Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, where women's participation in elections is marginally high

as compared to Kerala and other North-Eastern States. Table 5 gives the state-wise performance of women candidates in 1989 General Elections.

**TABLE 5
STATE-WISE PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN CANDIDATES IN
GENERAL ELECTIONS**

State/UT	Total Seats	Women Candidates Contested	Women Candidates Elected	Party Affiliation
Andhra Pradesh	42	7	5	INC
Bihar	54	17	2	JD, INC
Gujarat	26	9	-	-
Haryana	10	3	-	-
Himachal Pradesh	4	1	-	-
Jammu & Kashmir	6	1	-	-
Karnataka	28	11	-	-
Kerala	20	8	1	INC
Madhya Pradesh	40	21	3	BJP
Maharashtra	48	20	2	BJP, INC
Manipur	2	1	-	-
Orissa	21	4	-	-
Punjab	13	12	3	INC, SAD(M)
Rajasthan	25	6	1	BJP
Sikkim	1	1	-	-
Tamil Nadu	39	11	2	INC
Uttar Pradesh	85	41	6	BSP, JP, INC, CPM
West Bengal	42	11	2	CPM, CPI
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1	1	-	-
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1	1	-	-
Daman & Diu	1	1	-	-
Pondicherry	1	1	-	-
Delhi	9	7	-	-
Other States & UTs	12	-	-	-
Total:	529	198	27	-

As the data was presented earlier, it is sufficient to state: "that presence of a few women in high offices has projected an inflated image of women's access to power and dignity". This has helped to build an illusion which is very far from reality. Coming to the present efforts made by the state to empower women through Panchayati Raj bodies, these have yet to be tested. Conclusions of some intensive studies in states like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have stated that these local bodies with reservation even to women serve the interest of the dominant castes and economically belong to a strata of big and large farmers, traders and families with political clout.

Basically being a traditional society, women live in a stratified hierarchical structure at the domestic sphere. Their entry into public domain continues to have an impact on their decisions. They are not a homogeneous group with common interests. It has been generally observed that positions in the Panchayat and power are not coterminous and synonymous in the socio-economic political structure of the rural society. Lastly, the women representatives do not have a say in the decision-making process as they are not well informed about the intricacies of law and administrative procedures.

Increase in reservation does not ensure women's participation. Quantitative representation does not take care of the qualitative improvements to be made for the rural women, due to which the expectations remain largely unfulfilled. In order to bridge the existing elite-mass gap, Panchayati Raj bodies only ensure an entry in local bodies to women. Unless and until certain support services are provided to this class of rural poor, illiterate and vulnerable women, much of the efforts made in this line will be a far cry from the goal.

Conclusion

In order to ensure women's participation in local bodies, training in accounts, finance and administrative procedures is essential. An exposure to the existing development programmes, aims and objectives, support services available with the programme would be necessary. This will enable them to articulate their needs better. It is not formal educa-

tion which matters at this level, but functional literacy may be of more use to these representatives. At the village and block level both representatives, men and women, are illiterate. But the males have the advantage of participating in discussions of the village politics, whereas women seldom participate in such gatherings.

Women as a group need to be mobilized to articulate their needs with the available resources. There has been no effort on the part of the political parties to mobilize these women except for rallies and demonstrations. Women have been mobilized and unionized by the non-governmental organizations and other social organizations. They act as a catalyst to promote women's participation. Mainly their focus is to empower women economically as this would take care of other spheres of activity.

WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AGAINST LIQUOR IN ANDHRA PRADESH

M. Nagender Rao

The contemporary societies have been afflicted by the problem of consumption of alcohol. Many societies have been trying to get rid of this menace but could not succeed due to various reasons. Social scientists made extensive studies of this issue and revealed its tremendous impact on many socio-economic and political problems. Keeping its adverse affects on common man in view, prohibition of liquor was strongly propagated by Mahatma Gandhi during the period of freedom struggle and he successfully campaigned in many parts of India. The successors of Gandhi, in contrast to his thought, however, made it as one of the source of income by legalizing it. Andhra Pradesh has witnessed many movements against liquor since 1920. But the recent movement of women attracted international attention, the bases of liquor lobby were shaken and posed many critical questions to the political system.

There is no dispute over the impact of liquor on the society. Not only third world countries but developed countries also are not able to solve this critical puzzle. The scientists of United States of America made a comprehensive study and came out with concrete results which are more or less similar to Indian experiences. According to the survey most of the liquor addicts are economically very poor. The study also indicated that by the turn of century 30 to 33 per cent of homeless poor people have abused alcohol. This rate of alcohol abuse is at least three times greater than the general population rate. The highest rate of alcoholism was found among homeless native Americans. Alcohol affects the physical, mental and psychological functions of human body and reduces the life span to a greater extent. The addicts suffer most medical disorder at much greater rates

Table 1 shows major incidents which occurred during the last 14 years. The Table reveals many facts and it is interesting to note that the birthplace of Gandhiji, in Gujarat State contributed 200 deaths and occupied prominent place in the list. In many cases it is pitiable to note that women also contributed their share by consuming poisonous arrack and many of them died in various parts of the country. The law keepers like police constables have also become victims to this menace in Madhya Pradesh. The Table concludes that no section of the society has escaped from the hand of tragedy.

Anti-arrack Movements

People in various parts of the country are raising their voices against liquor but there is no coordination committee to unite the agitators and victims under a single banner. South Indian people particularly are organizing processions and meetings against the devilish menace. Due to various economic and political reasons all state governments except Tamil Nadu are supporting the liquor lobbies and exhibiting cruel attitude towards agitators.

The Kerala Prohibition Council was formed under the leadership of Manmadan in Kerala and started a movement against the atrocities of arrack contractors. The Council exposed the reluctance of all political parties to deal with liquor traders. Some of the villages successfully boycotted consumption of liquor, and slowly the influence has been spreading to other areas. All political parties are kept in a critical dilemma because in public neither can they condemn the agitators nor can they support the liquor contractors. The parties are found to be constrained to maintain an opportunistic neutrality for some time.

In the month of May 1992 nearly 200 persons were hospitalized by consuming adulterated liquor in Cuttack and some of them lost their sight. The Chairman of Cuttack Municipality, Trilochan Kanungo, started a movement against the sale of liquor in Orissa. The movement was a success as it achieved the closure of liquor shops in Cuttack and neighbouring villages. However, the Orissa Government took the help of the High Court to appease the liquor traders and opened the shops against the will of the people by

masking the judgement of High Court.

The experience of Tamil Nadu is different from other states. The Government is strongly determined to implement the prohibition of liquor with the help of the masses. All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam Party made prohibition of liquor an election issue in 1991, to which people positively responded and the party was elected with overwhelming majority. Because of public support the Government has successfully been implementing the prohibition of liquor. In this struggle women stood in the forefront, moulded public opinion against the consumption of liquor.

Genesis in Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh has a distinguished history in this movement. The state has witnessed many anti-arrack movements since 1920. Mahatma Gandhi appealed to the nation to practise prohibition of liquor in 1920. The enthusiastic youth of Andhra practised it and closed many shops in coastal area. In Guntur and Nellore districts all contractors boycotted the arrack auctions. All India Congress Committee met in Vijayawada from 31 March to 2 April 1921 in which Gandhiji appreciated the movement and encouraged them.¹

The issue of prohibition was also raised by Naxalites in various parts of the State. They have adopted various violent methods to achieve complete prohibition in Northern Telengana region. The Naxalites distributed pamphlets, issued statements in various newspapers, conducted public meetings and pasted posters. Elaborate propaganda against consumption and sale of arrack was made. The reluctant contractors were severely punished and some of them were killed. Due to the pressure of Naxalites, liquor contractors did not participate in the sale of liquor in 1991-92 in Northern Telengana. The Government of Andhra Pradesh took it as a prestige issue, involved all excise employees with the help of the armed police, many selling points were opened at cheaper rates. So people consumed more quantity of liquor, the income of the Government on arrack also increased to a great extent. The citadel of Naxalites, Warangal District was auctioned in 1990-91, for Rs 24 crores, when the

1. "Sara PI Sareenchina Nari", *Andhra Jyothi*, 27 September 1992.

contractors ran the liquor trade. In 1991-92, the prohibition was imposed by left extremists, an amount of Rs 34 crores was added to the State's treasury.² The growth of Rs 10 crores clearly reveals failure of Naxalites' policy on this issue. The people openly opposed the Naxalites' policy and consumed nearly 90 lakh litres of arrack more than in the previous year. The intelligent contractors observed the pulse of the people, actively participated in 1992-93 arrack auction and enhanced the Government's revenue considerably. The growth rate of income in Northern Telangana districts, namely, Adilabad, Nizamabad, Warangal and Karimnagar was crossed to 116, 60, 25 and 30 per cent respectively. An amount of Rs 40 crores was additionally collected from these districts.

The anti-liquor movement springing out of the burning hearts and cold hearths of the common semi-starved womenfolk is a symbol of a popular awakening. After eking out an underdog existence for decades with their drunken husbands, the women have finally taken up the cudgels against the sale and consumption of arrack in the state. A mighty women's movement against the trading of the deadly intoxicant has been taking firm roots in the entire State giving nightmares to the all powerful arrack contractors.

The fiery protest movement, unleashed by women power was triggered in Dubagunta village, Kalkiri Mandal, in Nellore district. Following the death of three drunken men in April 1992, when they lost their way and got drowned in the village tank, women compelled the closure of all arrack shops in the village. And the forced boycott of liquor shops spread to another 600 villages in the district. The agitation was spearheaded by the Anti-Arrack Coordination Committee comprising 36 voluntary organizations. 11 September, 1992 was a landmark in the history of Indian women. On that day the women exhibited united force to the world and forcibly stopped the arrack auction in Nellore District. Nearly 50,000 women gathered in front of auction centre and received lathi charge by the police. No political party or political leader led the rally, but the village women voluntarily participated with determination. Later all districts moved in the same direction; in many districts auctions were postponed. In all districts women were in the forefront, they

were demanding prohibition of arrack in the state. Anti-social elements, goondas and police several times beat the women. But agitators with their strong motivation were determined to die in the struggle. The state could not succeed in opening even a single shop in Nellore District. Districts of Chittoor, Kurnool, Prakasham, Guntur and Anantapur were highly influenced by this movement, most of the villages have boycotted consumption of arrack and closed down the shops. The position of contractors has become very critical. The State Government had decided to sell arrack in Nellore District through its excise employees. In Nellore town, when the women came to know of it, they went to the excise police station, put up a tent and conducted cultural programmes depicting the evils of alcoholism. The officials had no choice but to watch in embarrassment.³ Since 11 September 1992, not a single day passed without an incident of women raiding arrack shops and destroying liquor barrels. On 20 September 1992, a 100 strong crowd of women of Kotala village in Chandragiri Mandal of Chittoor District took their husbands to the local temple and made them take a vow that they would give up liquor and anyone breaking the vow would be required to pay Rs 2,000 as fine to the temple. This act was popularized in many parts of coastal Andhra Pradesh. In many villages women formed squads to check prohibition of liquor properly and to stop transport of liquor to the villages—the State Government supplied the arrack with the help of armed police but women successfully sent them back to the arrack depot.

On 2 October 1992, Gandhi Jayanti was celebrated by Andhra women in a new way. They organized processions, meetings in all district headquarters. Once again the photographs of Gandhiji were exhibited in the mass processions, even though his heirs (Government) were trying to suppress the movement. Several critics said that once again Gandhiji took birth in Andhra in the form of anti-arrack movement.

Conclusion

Andhra Pradesh has witnessed many movements against consumption of liquor since 1920. But the recent movements started by innocent rural women were very important and

3. *Indian Express*, 11 October 1992.

where Naxalites failed, the women came to the fore with their unity and strong motivation and succeeded. There appears to be quantitative and qualitative difference between them. Naxalites did not involve the masses. Without the consent of people they started it and failed to achieve their target. They only succeeded in creating some violent sensational incidents in various parts of the State. In this violence some of the poor employees of arrack contractors were killed and their families have become shelterless orphans.

The movement of illiterate rural women created a different atmosphere in the State, shook the bases of powerful liquor barons. The primary objective of the movement was to stop consumption of liquor. The awakening of the women will not be confined to the single objective. After achieving the goal definitely, attention will be spread to various fields including politics. The awareness of half of the population, certainly influence Indian politics in a right direction, and the problems of Indian electoral system like rigging, booth capturing, violence and defections could be curbed to a great extent. Women get proportionate representation not only in legislative bodies but also in various government organizations. Due to the participation of all sections in the political system the role of criminals in the politics will be reduced drastically, efficiency of the political system will be enhanced and healthy democratic traditions will be strengthened.

SECTION V

WOMEN AND VICTIMIZATION

WELFARE MEASURES FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF BASAVIS OF KURNOOL DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

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and

J. Sujana Mallika

Introduction

Dedicating a bull for public use on the death of a member of the family is a common practice among the Hindus. It serves as a breeding bull for the village flock. Similarly, girls are dedicated and are known as *Basavis* which literally means female breeding bulls. The institution of *Basavi* refers to an age-old practice of dedication for life of young girls to family/village gods and goddesses whereby the consecrated women are banned from contracting a legal wedlock. According to the survey conducted by the Social Welfare Department of Andhra Pradesh, there are as many as 15,850 *Busavis* (also known as *Jogins*, *Parvatis* and *Matangis*) mainly in the Telengana and the Rayalaseema regions of Andhra Pradesh and in Kurnool District, and survey hitherto conducted reveals that there are at least 600 *Basavis* in Adoni, Hologunda, Alur, Chippagiri, Kauthalam, Kurnool and Halaharvi revenue Mandals.

The *Basavis* mainly belong to the Scheduled and the Backward communities among whose families it is customary to dedicate a daughter as *Basavi* to perpetuate the patrilineal line, when there is no male heir in the family. It is also common for some parents of the said castes to dedicate their daughters in pursuance of some vow taken at the time of family distress or calamity or serious illness to obtain relief or cure for themselves or their children. At times, parents desiring male issues or children of any gender promise a daughter to the familial or village deity. In addition, those

who are unable to spare money required for the daughter's betrothal and marriage also take help of the custom.

A dedicated girl permanently stays in her parental home and usually lives on concubinage with a person of equal or higher caste. The *Basavis* do not usually live on flesh trade promiscuously on hire. A *Basavi* who lives as a concubine gets a weekly or monthly sum towards her livelihood. She is not, however, despised in the society. "No stigma attaches to the *Basavis* or their children and they are received on terms of equality by other members of their caste." (E. Thurston : 1909). The children of a *Basavi* enjoy legitimacy and in fact, *Basavis* themselves are outwardly indistinguishable from married women of their own community.

Furthermore, a *Basavi* is believed to be immune from widowhood and is called *akhandasaubhagyavati*. Since she is wedded to a divine deity, she is the most welcome guest at weddings and is regarded as bearer of fortune. At weddings people would like to get a string of the *tali* prepared by her and she threads on it a few beads from her own necklace. However, nowadays the people have almost stopped practising this cultural trait, especially in and around urban areas.

The institution of *Basavi* endows masculine privileges to the dedicated girls. Contrary to all Hindu law, a *Basavi* is entitled to inherit her parents' property and perform their funeral rites as if she were a son; her children belong to the lineage of their mother and not to the lineage of their biological father; if she has a son, he inherits her property and perpetuates her father's family. If she has only daughter/s then a daughter is again initiated into Basavihood.

It is however disheartening to note that the socio-economic life of the *Basavis* is miserable. They eke out their livelihood by depending upon a multitude of occupations such as casual or agricultural labour, firewood-selling, begging, petty business, etc. Almost all *Basavis* feel unhappy with their present life which is shrouded in poverty, illiteracy, low standard of living and misery. The financial position of most of the *Basavis* is not found. Most of them are landless. Of late, some *Basavis* have started living on flesh trade. Moreover, most of the *Basavis* are usually deserted by their paramours after the birth of two or three children. Thus, with the passage of time, the *Basavi* system has become

degenerated and the *Basavis* in course of time have become downtrodden. Hence, efforts by the Government of Andhra Pradesh (as well as some voluntary organizations) are being made for the emancipation of *Basavis* from age-old shackles by raising their socio-economic status as part of the plans made for the welfare of all beings. From the psychological point of view these welfare programmes are aimed at generating among the *Basavis* a new urge and an inspiration for better living, a desire to improve their material conditions, and to have a more constructive outlook towards their future development.

Legal Programmes

As in Karnataka State, in Andhra Pradesh too, the Government has enacted an Act in 1988 prohibiting the practice of *Basavi/Jogini* system. According to the Act, a person who encourages the perpetuation of the said custom or participates in the ritual concerned has to undergo an imprisonment for a minimum period of two years and to pay a fine of Rs 3,000 to Rs 5,000. As a welfare measure a person marrying a daughter of *Basavi/Devadasi* is awarded Rs 1,000 as an incentive by the Social Welfare Department. However, not a single case of default is recorded and there is no vigorous implementation of the legal provisions protecting the dignity of women. Despite official claims to the contrary the system often continues undeterred, at least in secrecy. It is reported that every year at least 200 young innocent girls voluntarily or forcibly accept *Jogatihood*. The occurrence of a few theogamous marriages in the Balkampet area of Hyderabad itself in the month of April 1990 is a standing example of the said fact.¹

Sponsored Programmes

After India became independent, the *Basavis*, like any backward class of people, are subjected to greater interference in their life because of sponsored changes at least from 1986-87 onwards. Apart from declaring the *Basavi* custom as illegal, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has launched several welfare schemes such as vocational training skill

1. *Andhra Jyothi* (A Telugu daily) dated 9-4-1990

development, self-employment and income generation, animal husbandry, allotment of house-sites, construction of pucca building, etc.

For a critical evaluation of different schemes implemented in Kurnool District under various sectors some more details are furnished in matters related to various sectors or schemes.

Programmes Implemented in Adoni Mandal, Kurnool District

The following are the programmes aimed at the upliftment of the *Basavis* in Adoni Mandal. (See Table 1).

Tailoring

In rural areas, the employment opportunities especially for women are scanty. Imparting specific skills enables them to have access to employment and income generation. In this connection, the Kurnool District authorities have established training-cum-production units in tailoring, soap-making, chalk piece-making, matchstick-making, book-binding and spinning. In order to improve the economic status of the *Basavis* of Adoni town, a garment-making centre with necessary infrastructure facilities was established under DRDA in 1986. Training was imparted to 25 *Basavis* in tailoring for a period of 12 months. The trainees were paid Rs 50 each per month towards stipend. On completion of training, 15 out of 25 trainees were provided employment in the production centre. They were able to earn Rs 14 to 15 per day by stitching clothes which were supplied to the Departments of Social Welfare, Tribal Welfare, SC and ST Corporation etc. Similarly, during 1987-88 another batch of 20 *Basavis* underwent training in the said skill. But seven of them dropped out in the middle of the training. The district Social Welfare Department paid each trainee a sum of Rs 120 towards stipend for a period of six months. After training, they were assisted by the said department to start their own independent units by supplying sewing machines free of cost. Thus, it can be said that this welfare scheme has been enthusiastically received by most of the beneficiaries.

TABLE I
WELFARE PROGRAMMES IMPLEMENTED FOR THE BENEFIT OF
BASAVIS OF ADONI TOWN, KURNool DISTRICT

Sl. No.	Programmes	Sponsoring Agency	Period of Training	Stipend per Month	Number of Benefi- claries	Year of Implemen- tation	Other Details
1.	Tailoring	DRDA	12 months	Rs 50/-	25	1985-86	-
2.	Tailoring	Social Welfare Department	6 months	Rs 120/-	13	1987-88	Trainees were given sewing machines free of cost
3.	Soap-making	DRDA	6 months	Rs 120/-	10	1986-87	-
4.	Chalk-piece making	DRDA	6 months	Rs 120/-	10	1986-87	-
5.	Matchstick-making	DRDA	6 months	Rs 120/-	10	1986-87	-
6.	Book-binding	DRDA	6 months	Rs 120/-	10	1986-87	-
7.	Spinning	DRDA	6 months	Rs 120/-	30	1986-87	-

Soap-making

In 1986, a training-cum-production centre was started under DRDA to impart training in detergent soap-making. A batch of 10 trainees was imparted the necessary skill by paying a stipend of Rs 120 each per month for a period of six months. Immediately after the completion of training, production of soap commenced. But the production unit could attract only three employees due to the meagre payment of wages at the rate of Rs 8 per day. Moreover, the centre could not be run properly for want of proper management, non-supply of raw material, sub-standard machinery, insufficient allotment of budget, rejection of soaps by the welfare hostels on grounds of lack of quality of the product, etc. However, the district authorities concerned took a decision in the month of August 1990 to resume the production of soaps and to overcome all the constraints in the sale of the product.

Chalk piece-making

In 1986, another welfare measure, namely, Training-cum-Production unit in chalk piece-making was taken up by the district authorities under DRDA. A batch of 10 beneficiaries underwent training in the said skill. Each trainee received a sum of Rs 120 towards stipend for a period of six months. The production unit continued to function up to March 1990 only by providing employment to 14 beneficiaries who used to get a daily wage of Rs 10 to Rs 14 each. Recently it had been decided at the District Collector's meeting with other officials concerned, to resume the work of chalk piece-making and to supply the same to all schools in the district.

Matchstick-making

This welfare measure of imparting vocational training for a batch of 10 beneficiaries was taken up in 1986 under DRDA. Each trainee was paid an amount of Rs 120 towards stipend for a period of six months. But the production unit started functioning from 1989 providing employment to 10 trainees only and the unit was ultimately closed by the end of March 1990 because of several reasons, such as lack of sufficient marketability of the product, severe competition from the local units, substandard quality of the match-sticks

payment of meagre daily wages at the rate of Rs 5 or Rs 6. However, in the month of August 1990 the District Collector took a decision after holding a dialogue with the officials concerned to resume the work of match-making by overcoming all the constraints.

Book-binding

The task of running a training-cum-production unit in book-binding was taken up by the authorities concerned in 1986 under DRDA. As a result, a batch of 10 young male children of *Basavis* received training in the said vocational skill. The trainees were paid a sum of Rs 120 each during the six month period of training by way of stipend. The production unit, which started functioning from 1988 only, was closed by the turn of 1990. The production unit could not attract more than 10 trainees to work because of several obstacles such as meagre payment of daily wages at the rate of Rs 5 or Rs 6, non-supply of paper by the State Trading Corporation at subsidized price etc.

Spinning

This scheme was undertaken in 1986 by the district authorities under DRDA. The training-cum-production unit in spinning provided employment only to four out of 30 total trainees who received a stipend of Rs 120 each during the period of six-month training. Moreover, the production unit also ceased to function four months after commencement because of two main reasons such as hard nature of the work and payment of unremunerative wages to the employees at the rate of Rs 3 or Rs 4 per day.

Programmes Implemented in Alur Mandal of Kurnool District

In order to improve the economic status of the poor *Basavis*, the district administrative authorities have undertaken not only skill training for employment but also animal husbandry programme for creating self-employment. The following are the programmes implemented in Alur Mandal of Kurnool District (Table 2).

TABLE 2
WELFARE PROGRAMMES IMPLEMENTED FOR THE REHABILITATION OF
BASAVIS OF ALUR MANDAL, KURNOOL DISTRICT

Sl. No.	Programme	Sponsoring Agency	Number of Beneficia- ries	Year of Implemen- tation	Other Details
1.	Distribution of sheep units under Basavu Rehabili- tation Programme -do-	Dept. of Animal Husbandry, Social Welfare Dept. and S.C. Corporation -do-	27	21-10-'88	All the beneficiaries belong to Alur, the Mandal headquarters
2.	Sanctioning of House-site Pattas	Revenue Department	32	1990	<p>S.C. Corporation arranged for the payment of Rs 100 for each beneficiary towards subsistence allowance from Nov 1988 to Oct 1989</p> <p>-do-</p> <p>77 6-10-'89 — to 6-12-'89 — The beneficiaries belong to various villages of Alur Mandal</p> <p>— 27 out of 77 beneficiaries were given a subsistence allowance of Rs 150 from 2-11-'89 to April 1990</p> <p>— Each beneficiary belonging to Alur was given a house-site measuring 3 cents</p> <p>— The project of construction of houses for the Basavus is under consideration.</p>

Distribution of Sheep Units

Under animal husbandry sector the district authorities have distributed sheep units (four sheep and one ram) to a maximum number of 102 BasavI families belonging to different villages of Alur Mandal. All the beneficiaries enthusiastically received the sheep units in various periods from 21-11-1988 to 6-12-1989 with a view to supplementing their income. In the first two spells of delivery 27 beneficiaries and eight beneficiaries belonging to Alur, the Mandal headquarters village received sheep units on 21-10-1988 and 29-10-1988 respectively. The S.C. Corporation made arrangements for the payment of Rs 100 for each beneficiary towards subsistence allowance from November 1988 to October 1989. Similarly, in the next spells of delivery 77 beneficiaries hailing from different villages of Alur Mandal received sheep units from 6-10-1989 to 6-12-1989. But only 27 out of 77 total beneficiaries were sanctioned an enhanced subsistence allowance of Rs 150 from 2-11-1989 to April 1990. Moreover, steps were taken to insure the sheep units and to provide health check-up by the veterinary doctor.

Furthermore, under housing scheme Mandal Revenue authorities of Alur have sanctioned house-site pattas, each measuring 3 cents, to 32 beneficiaries in 1990. The project of construction of houses for all the beneficiaries, who belong to Alur, is under consideration.

Programmes Implemented in Hologunda Mandal or Kurnool District

The following are the programmes implemented for the rehabilitation of BasavI families of Hologunda Mandal of Kurnool district (Table 3).

Distribution of Milch Animals

In 1988, the district authorities undertook the programme of distribution of milch animals (one Jersey cow to each beneficiary) to 40 beneficiaries of Hologunda Mandal. Apart from extending a subsistence allowance of Rs 150 per month to each beneficiary for a period of six months, steps were also taken to provide feeding material to each cow at the cost of Rs 200 per month for a period of six months. Similarly, an

TABLE 3
**WELFARE PROGRAMMES IMPLEMENTED FOR THE BENEFIT OF BASAVS OF HOLEGUNDAMANDAL,
KURNOOL DISTRICT**

Sl. No.	Name of the Programme	Sponsoring Agency	Number of Beneficia- ries	Year of Implemen- tation	Other Details
1.	Distribution of milch animals (cross-breed cows)	Social Welfare Dept. and Animal Husbandry Department	40	1988	Each beneficiary was given a Jersey cow
2.	Construction of pucca houses	Social Welfare Department	35	1988	The beneficiary is allowed to construct her own house without contractor
3.	Allotment of surplus cultivable land	Revenue Department	10	1988	Each beneficiary was allotted 2 acres of dryland
4.	Distribution of dhoti or saree	Social Welfare Department	128	1988	—
5.	Sanctioning of pension to the aged	Social Welfare Department	8	1988	—

amount of Rs 250 each for the construction of 32 cattle-sheds was sanctioned for the benefit of cattle. Furthermore, efforts were made to insure all the cows and to provide health check-up frequently by the veterinary doctor. In case of the death of cattle, new ones are replaced for the benefit of beneficiaries.

Housing Scheme

Under the housing scheme, the authorities concerned undertook the programme of constructing a complex of pucca houses benefiting 35 beneficiaries at Hologunda in 1988. For the construction of each house, an amount of Rs 8000 was sanctioned. The speciality of the scheme was that the beneficiaries themselves were allowed to construct their respective houses without the interference of any building contractor.

Allotment of Surplus Cultivable Land

In order to provide permanent assets, the programme of allotting two acres of surplus dryland each for 10 beneficiaries was undertaken under agriculture development sector in 1988. In this context, it is to be noted that the project of providing irrigation facilities is under consideration.

Distribution of Dhoti or Saree

The District Social Welfare Department, Kurnool made arrangements in 1988 for the distribution of either dhoti or saree to as many as 128 beneficiaries of Hologunda Mandal. An amount of Rs 31 was sanctioned for each garment, spending a total amount of Rs 3,968.

Pension to the Aged Basavis

The district authorities concerned arranged for the payment of Rs 50 each for the benefit of eight aged Basavis of the said Mandal who had been neglected by their kith and kin for various socio-economic reasons.

An examination of various welfare measures undertaken by the district administration, thus, reveals that since the implementation of development programmes the *Basavi* women could get an opportunity to expose themselves to outer world through various administrative personnel. The

government is also greatly encouraged by the beneficiaries themselves who are open to new ideas and schemes willing to adapt themselves to the changing patterns of life. Almost all schemes, except the scheme of spinning, have been enthusiastically received by the beneficiaries. Further, most of the *Basavis* could realize, to a greater extent, the social and legal consequences of the perpetuation of the evil practice. They are prepared to marry anyone who whole-heartedly comes forward to become a life-mate. A good number of them have also strongly determined to put an end to the age-old practice within this generation. In addition, they are readily willing to make use of any suitable welfare measure which the government/voluntary organization launches. Hence, in this context, it can be stated that any section of people accepts innovations, provided the latter are personally more rewarding and satisfying than what they replace or supplement.

However, it is disheartening to note that the government had bothered about the upliftment of the *Basavis* only in 1980s after a lapse of four decades of independence. Even the development programmes hitherto undertaken are also inadequate. Hence, more number of programmes are to be undertaken on a massive scale with clear-cut formulation and foresight. They should also be need-based and pragmatic.

Further, the beneficiaries who are engaged in various production units of Kurnool District complain about the irregular payment of wages. For instance, in the case of tailoring unit, wages are paid twice a year. Moreover, the trainees working in different units are totally dissatisfied with the meagre wages which are not at all remunerative. It is also alleged that most of the production units were to be closed mainly because of mismanagement and misappropriation of funds and lack of commitment and concern on the part of some administrative personnel. In addition, some of the schemes are inappropriate and are not well formulated with much care and foresight. Hence, there is a dire need for involving the prospective beneficiaries, for holding a dialogue with them while formulating any proposed scheme.

Suggestions for the Speedy and Effective Rehabilitation of the Basavis

It is an established fact that optimal development of human resources can be achieved through a process of empowering the socio-economically vulnerable sections of population. Hence, the strategy of government as well as voluntary bodies is to be based on the fact that socio-political change, particularly educational change is a weapon by which human beings can ultimately transform their environment through a process of conscientization. It is believed that this process actuates the people to enter into a dialogue to achieve a deepening awareness both of the social and cultural realities that shaped their lives, and of their ability to transform that reality. The major barriers for such a transformation is powerlessness, of the poor. Hence, empowering the poor *Basavis* through an integrated approach should be the strategy for any promoter of induced change—government or voluntary bodies. The strategy involves a frontal attack simultaneously from four angles namely (1) education and skill formation; (2) health, medical relief and child care; (3) relief, rehabilitation and community infrastructure; and (4) assets creation, employment and income generation. In this context, a few suggestions may be put forth with regard to the speedy and effective rehabilitation of the *Basavis*. They are as follows:

1. The government may undertake the task of implementing the ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services) programme by covering a network of services that would benefit more number of *Basavi* women and their children. The service should include immunization, health check-up, supplementary nutrition, health education, non-formal, preschool education for the children in the age group of 3-6 years and prenatal and postnatal care for mothers. In addition to these package of services, non-formal education for school drop-out children, adult education in functional literacy, training and assistance to ICDS mothers for income-generating schemes, maternal and child health care centres are to be provided as extra components under the said programme.
2. Apart from the existing schemes of welfare, new schemes such as imparting job-oriented training in various voca-

tional skills like embroidery, carpentry, electrical motor winding, household wiring, bakery, typewriting, toy-making, TV and radio assembling, biscuit-making, poultry, garment-making, dairy, etc, for the *Basavi* children, especially for those who have completed schooling up to tenth standard as well as dropouts, are to be taken up. On completion of the training in the chosen vocational skill, the trainees may be assisted to start their own independent units or provided employment in the production units of the said vocations.

3. A band of devoted social workers with a missionary zeal and commitment and well-known voluntary agencies of macro-level nature such as RASS, AWARE etc, should come forward to take up various social, amelioratory and development programmes for the *Basavis*.

In conclusion, it may be said that legal and welfare measures alone are not sufficient to eradicate the practice. Structural transformation is necessary and desirable for any change or improvement in the present condition of *Basavis*. Further, in our commitment to change, the needs of family at the household level are to be recognized as the central arena for intervention in the efforts towards combating the practice. With respect to *Basavis*, it is important to recognize that in reality it is the family which is the basic social unit where family decisions and strategies are evolved to dedicate girls to various deities in compliance with cultural values and social structure of unequal and exploitative relationships of the community. Hence, to combat this barrier or obstacle, both the modern and the traditional folk media such as *Veedhi Natakam* (street drama), *Burra Katha* (ballad), *Tholu Bommalata* (puppet show), *Pagatti Veshalu* (day playlets), folk songs, etc, are to be made use of to expose the consequences of the evil practice of *Basavi* system and to bring about a lot of differences by mobilizing the people in general to imbibe more and more awareness.

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